REPORT RESUMES

ED 020 941 TE 500 192

FRESHMAN ENGLISH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.
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MODERN LANGUAGE ASSN. OF AMERICA, NEW YORK, N.Y.
PUB DATE 68
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.50 HC-$3.00 73P.

DESCRIPTORS- *ENGLISH PROGRAMS, *COMPOSITION (LITERARY), *ENGLISH INSTRUCTION, *COLLEGE FRESHMEN, *INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, COURSE CONTENT, ENGLISH, HIGHER EDUCATION, COMPOSITION SKILLS (LITERARY), WRITING SKILLS, STUDENT EVALUATION, GRADING, WRITING EXERCISES, TEACHING TECHNIQUES, TEACHING GUIDES, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII, HONOLULU,

FOR A REPORT ON COLLEGE PROGRAMS IN FRESHMAN COMPOSITION, THE ASSOCIATION OF DEPARTMENTS OF ENGLISH OBTAINED SYLLABI AND COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FROM DIRECTORS OF FRESHMAN COMPOSITION IN 66 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. AMONG THE DATA ASSEMBLED FOR THE FULL REPORT (AVAILABLE AS TE 500 190) IS THE DESCRIPTION OF THE FRESHMAN ENGLISH PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII, WHICH IS CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT. THE FIRST SECTION, "GENERAL INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTORS," PROVIDES BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENTS IN FRESHMAN ENGLISH AND DISCUSSES ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES FOR THE FRESHMAN ENGLISH STAFF. THE MAJOR PORTION OF THE DOCUMENT CONSISTS OF A REPORT ON TEXTS, MATERIALS, AND OBJECTIVES FOR ENGLISH 101 AND 102. THEME ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING, QUESTIONS STUDENTS MAY ASK, AS WELL AS GUIDELINES USED IN THE ASSISTANCE OF NEW STAFF ARE DISCUSSED. A SUMMARY SECTION ABOUT FRESHMAN ENGLISH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IS ALSO INCLUDED. (BN)

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TE 500 192

FRESHMAN ENGLISH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

The Association of Departments of English collected syllabi and course descriptions from directors of freshman composition at sixty-six American colleges and universities. A survey report based on this information, College Programs in Freshman Composition (1968) by Bonnie E. Nelson, is available through ERIC as TE 500 190.

Because many of the directors sent information which is not available to the public and which could not be included in the full report, some of these program descriptions are reproduced here in one of ten auxillary reports: See also:

TE 500 191	State University of New York at Buffalo
TE 500 192	University of Hawaii
TE 500 193	Antioch College, Baker University, Clark University, Elmira College, Emory University, Juniata College, University of Maryland, Swarthmore College, and Tulane University
TE 500 194	University of Tulsa, Columbia Basin College, and Western State College of Colorado
TE 500 195	Junior College of Albany, Amarillo College, Bakersfield Junior College, Beckley College, California Concordia College, Cazenovia College, Colby Community Junior College, Grand View College, Harcum Junior College, Jefferson Community College, Lakewood State Junior College, Miami-Dade Junior College, Monroe County Community College, and Portland Community College
TE 500 196	University of Kentucky, Ohio State University, Purdue University, and Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
TE 500 197	Augustana College, Central Washington State College, Clarke College, State College, at Framingham, Harding College, Emporia State Teachers College, and King's College
TE 500 198	Bob Jones, Duquesne, John Carroll, Kansas State, Marquette, Northern Illinois, Washington State, and Washington Universities, as well as the Universities of Alabama, Dayton, Minnesota (Duluth), and Mississippi
TE 500 199	South Dakota State, Southern Illinois (Edwardsville), Tufts, and Wake Forest Universities, as well as the Universities of North Carolina, Santa Clara, Southern Florida, and Southern California

BONNIE E. NELSON, COMPILER
MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION
1968

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

FRESHMAN ENGLISH PROGRAM
PART A

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTORS
1967-68

CONTENTS:

I. Background Information About Students in Freshman English

II. Administrative Guidelines For the Freshman English Staff

September, 1967

Part A

I

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENTS IN FRESHMAN ENGLISH

English 101 and 102 at the University of Hawaii constitute a one-year course in expository writing that is required of all students in all colleges of the University, except those who have earned exemption from freshman composition, or placement in an accelerated course, by a superior showing on the College Entrance Examination Board's Advanced Placement Examination in English or on the Freshman English Anticipatory Examination. This fall about 3,500 students will enroll in English 101, and 80-100 will take English 105 (the accelerated course). Another 400 passed English 101 in the two Summer Sessions.

Our freshmen may seem particularly weak when we read their first papers. But compare favorably with those in other state universities. Admissions officers report that our freshmen rank at or slightly above the national mean among students who have taken the College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Test. If they show weaknesses in verbal aptitude, these weaknesses are often more than balanced by mathematical aptitude. In recent years roughly 50% of the students who came into the University from public schools ranked in the top quintile of their high school class; 21% of those who entered the University from private schools ranked in the top quintile of their class. The figures are probably higher for students entering the College of Arts and Sciences. Only two of three residents of Hawaii who apply to the University are accepted; only one out of two mainland applicants is accepted. The University, it is clear, selects at least reasonably able students and selects with care. Some of its students are as good as those one would find in any public university.

Why, then, is a teacher likely to be disappointed with the first papers of his students? For one thing, our students, like most other young people entering college, experience the "muddle" that Harold Martin, Chairman of the College Entrance Examination Board's Commission on English, described in 1964 in a talk to the Conference on College Composition and Communication. Calling the teacher of Freshman Composition "the middle man in the muddle" (which he agreed might be equally well be phrased "the muddle man in the middle"), Martin reminded his listeners that the freshman year marks a transition from the friendly, even intimate environment of the high school classroom to a complex, impersonal and competitive environment where each student has to produce more work of higher quality than has ever before been demanded of him. Small wonder, Martin observed, that the student who has been making A's in high school themes should start college composition with C's and D's. In high school the student knows his teacher reasonably well and is writing much of the time about personal experiences or about literary works that have been thoroughly discussed. Furthermore, in many public schools, he does not write very frequently, for his teacher has 180-220 students in 6-7 classes each day (30 or more class hours per week) and has little time to read themes. When the teacher does assign and read themes, he often does not annotate them very carefully. In college the teacher is unknown and forbidding, the assignments are longer and more frequent than in high school, the subjects are essays, literary works, or issues that the student has never previously had to address. Moreover, since the teacher has only 75 students and teaches only 9 hours per week, comments are likely to be thorough and quite strict. It is hardly surprising, in the circumstances, that the freshman's thinking is superficial, his idioms are fuzzy, his metaphors incongruous, his diction abstract.

When we see these deficiencies in the freshman's "style," we need to remember the normal freshman "muddles" they reveal. But our students in Hawaii also have some special difficulties of which we need equally to be aware. Most of our students are Orientals; many of them come from family and social environments in which they have to be bilingual. Many may speak Japanese or Chinese at home and among their friends. Although the number of our students who speak true "pidgin" is small, there are some who speak a sort of "pidgin" to family and friends in order to be understood and accepted. Still more students speak with a distinctive "island accent," which makes it difficult for a teacher reared on the mainland to understand them. If our students are reticent in class (Speech teachers report that having to give a talk before their classmates makes some students physically ill), the explanation may be the influence of their culture, which enjoins young people to be quiet and places a higher value on not speaking than on saying what is wrong (and losing "face"). But an equally important explanation may be that, facing a Caucasian stranger who regularly speaks standard English, students lack the confidence they must have before they will readily put their idiom and intonation on public display. If our students' idiom and intonation appear semi-literate to teachers unfamiliar with the state, we need to remember that those who speak Japanese or "pidgin" in much of their daily life have limited opportunities to master the standard idioms of spoken English--and nowhere near the practice in writing that they need in order to master standard written English, either. Despite these conditions, many students can be encouraged to speak up constructively in class, on the other hand, instructors should not worry if students in their classes at first appear reluctant to engage in discussion.

Still other conditions limit our students' abilities in thinking and writing. Relatively few of the native-born freshmen (3/4 or more of our students were born in Hawaii) have traveled outside the state; apart from the experience on their jobs (many of our students work 20 hours or more a week besides carrying a full program), their knowledge of the world is slight, and they speak as informed observers only on subjects that are important to their family or their culture. Because they hold jobs and because they come from homes where few books are found, many of them have not read widely or developed an interest in books, ideas, and issues. Not having read extensively or practiced writing very much, many students lack the vocabulary and the familiarity with standard English idiom that one acquires only by regular reading and writing. Many, therefore, cannot cope effectively with works of history or literature or "intellectual prose" such as are usually assigned in college. Indeed, most of our students are trained neither in the home nor in school to read, understand, and evaluate--let alone to write--expository essays; the geography and climate provide many alternative ways of spending time besides reading and comparatively few students can be called avid readers or widely read. This gap in their backgrounds makes it necessary for us to regard training the students to read and evaluate what they read as one of the fundamental objectives of freshman composition.

Yet for all their apparent shortcomings, most of our students are trained to respect "education," even though they do not know, in practice, what education is or what use they will make of their education after college. Families in which parents are not trained in college want "education" for their children, because they believe that their children will get nowhere in the world without it. But these families are likely to think of "education" as professional or technical training, rather than as exposure to liberal studies and as training of the mind so that it can develop sound values and make reasonable judgments. Perhaps the major paradox with which we must deal is that students who value education in theory may seem indifferent to our teaching. This apparent indifference to learning may simply conceal uncertain goals in life and frustration at being unable to perform complex tasks that college in general and freshman composition in particular put before them.

These generalizations will not hold, of course, for every students, but they are valid enough to guide the planning of our course, which must meet the needs of the majority rather than of the exceptions. Clearly English 101 (and 102) must begin by recognizing what the students can (and cannot) do when they enroll, and must help them to progress at a pace that is both rapid and reasonable. At the same time instructors should realize that freshmen entering the University and English 101 are constantly improving (if admissions data are at all reliable), and that it may take a good deal of trial and error to find an instructional pace that is neither too fast nor too slow for our students this year.

Part A

II

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES FOR THE FRESHMAN ENGLISH STAFF

CLASS MEETINGS

Classes normally meet three times a week for fifty minutes each period. The only exceptions are classes conducted under the College of General Studies, which meet twice a week, either for two hours and five minutes or for one hour and fifteen minutes (depending on the number of meetings in the course). In the regular term each class meets some 40-44 times.

Punctuality in starting classes (at half past the hour) is a necessary, albeit minor, virtue. Since many students have to walk some distance to classes at the next period, instructors ought to respect the bell announcing the end of a class. If an instructor is ill and cannot meet his class, he must notify the departmental secretary (944-8368) as early as possible. If he can find a colleague to substitute without serious inconvenience, find; if not, the secretary can at least arrange to have the class dismissed without letting it wait around for twenty or thirty minutes.

Classes should not be wholly or largely devoted to lectures. Sometimes an instructor may need to explain a procedure or assignment in some detail, but in most classes students should be encouraged to speak up, even though instructors may find it hard to involve some students in the discussions. Instructors may properly call on students during class (without advance notice) to discuss assigned work, to comment on the observations of other students, to answer questions about problems raised in discussion, and so on. Instructors should act as if they expected students to be prepared each day for discussion (even though the expectation itself would be somewhat over-optimistic) and should conduct the class on the assumption that students will be alert and responsive to issues raised. Sometimes acting on this assumption can generate the behavior that is being assumed. Students should be encouraged to ask questions, especially about problems they are meeting in their writing assignments.

Classes are usually devoted to discussion of the readings, of theme assignments being made and themes being returned, and of rhetorical or logical problems. Instructors should give considerable attention in class to samples of students' own writing (especially to good samples), so that students can learn from each other's successes or failures and, more important, so that students will know that they may at any time have to address a larger audience than the instructor alone. Students can learn much from analysis of representative papers illustrating what a writer can achieve, and what problems he may face in any assignment. In choosing papers for class discussion, instructors should seek above average or good papers. Students can be discouraged by discussion of papers that are all bad or mostly bad.

Although in any writing course the student learns mainly from the experience of writing under alert, sympathetic criticism, classes are opportunities for giving students significant help with writing problems that they are encountering; classes are not primarily recitation hours (where the student is supposed simply to show that he has done his home work) nor duels of wits between instructor and student. While it recognizes that students sometimes come to class grossly unprepared, the Freshman English Committee deplores and discourages the hasty dismissal of classes in which some students are obviously unprepared. Instructors should exercise patience, although there may be meetings at which so little is being accomplished that to dismiss the class early is the only alternative to protracted boredom for teacher and students.

CONFERENCES

Each instructor should set aside, and keep, two hours of "office hours" each week for each class he teaches. He should also plan to see each student for a conference (twenty to thirty minutes) at least once during the semester, oftener if possible. Instructors should feel free to ask students to come to the office to talk over themes or their progress in the course. Occasionally it may be desirable to substitute individual conferences for meetings of the full class, but not more than three or four class meetings a semester ought to be used for this purpose.

THEME ASSIGNMENTS

The approximate number of themes for each term is stated in the course program. The majority of these themes will be written outside of class in accordance with the instructor's assignments. It is important that all instructors assign the approximately the same number of themes, so that an instructor who take over a student in a later semester can count on his having written the suggested number of essays and on his having practiced the logical and rhetorical procedures described in the course program.

To avoid ambiguity in assignments and to give themselves and their students a written record of theme topics, instructors should ditto assignments for distribution. Needless to say, dittoed assignments should be thoughtfully planned and the instructions carefully drafted. See suggestions about theme assignments in the memeographed "Supplementary Instructional Materials."

All staff members are asked to file with the departmental secretary a copy of each of their theme assignments, which, as above, should be dittoed. (It is not necessary to file class assignments or miscellaneous handouts.) A special file drawer will be set aside for this purpose, and each instructor will find a folder with his name on it in that drawer. Besides serving as permanent records of how each staff member is teaching the course (records that will be valuable for instructors meeting students in 102 and for administrators handling students' questions), these files will be available for consultation by other staff members. They should be a means for exchange of ideas among staff members.

IN-CLASS WRITING

Since the course attempts to prepare students to write under pressure as well as at leisure, and since class themes may reveal how thoroughly students are improving their habits of thinking and writing, roughly one-third of the theme assignments each term should be written in class.

But these assignments should be sentences, paragraphs, or essays written for the practice in writing; they should not be factual quizzes designed simply to "test the reading" or to test matters of grammar, usage, or mechanics. The essays a student reads he should be able to discuss orally or in writing; the grammatical and/or rhetorical material he studies should influence his work on his themes. Virtually all written work submitted by students should be in continuous prose, and should enable him to practice toward improving his writing.

LATE THEMES AND MISSED CLASS THEMES

The student should learn early that he is expected to turn in his work on time. And no paper should be accepted for credit more than seven days after it was due, unless the student produces a valid excuse for the lateness.

Students who miss in-class themes should be allowed to make them up if their absence on the day of the theme was excusable. If the absence was not excusable the student should lose the opportunity to submit that theme for credit.

RETURNING THEMES WITH COMMENTS

All instructors should return students' themes (or make them available for inspection) within a reasonable time -- one week at most -- of the day on which they were submitted. Themes should carry specific and constructive marginal and general comments. (See suggestions in the "Supplementary Instructional Materials" regarding features to be considered in the reading of themes.)

The Freshman English Committee strongly recommends that no grades be assigned to individual themes. The instructor should let his comments reveal to students his general impression of each paper. Letter grades, inevitably, are arbitrary, often hypocritical (on many papers a wide range of grades might be assigned, depending on the instructor's purposes in giving a grade) and usually hard to defend with conviction. Students whose overall standing is unsatisfactory, however, should be warned before mid-semester grades are submitted and three or four weeks before the end of the semester (while they can still try to improve their work).

REVISION OF THEMES

Since students often learn from correcting earlier mistakes, instructors should ask students to revise most of their themes, especially in 101. Revisions ought usually to consist of more than filling in needed commas and periods; students should rewrite completely wherever appropriate. A student ought not to be regarded as having completed an assignment until he has turned in a satisfactory revision. Revisions should normally be due not more than one or two meetings after the annotated theme has been returned, and at least one meeting before the next regular theme is due.

THEME FOLDERS AND FORMAT OF THEMES

Each student is asked to buy (25¢) a University of Hawaii Theme Folder in which to store his themes. The instructor may allow the student to keep the themes during the semester (so that the student can look them over and observe his progress or problems, and can bring themes with him to conferences), or he can retain the themes and folders in his office, and make them available for discussion during conferences. (An instructor who followed the second procedure would place the themes in the student's folder after he has revised it and turned in the revision.) Whichever procedure he follows, the instructor should go over with students the inside panels of the folder, pointing out his preferences as to margins and other features of format. He should also draw students' attention to the rules regarding late themes, and should insist that students read carefully the discussion of plagiarism.

COLLECTION OF THEMES

At the end of the semester students who have kept their themes and folders should be required to turn them in to the instructor, arranged in order by date. While we impose no sanctions on a student who loses a theme or two, the instructor should discourage students from letting themes disappear.

FINAL EXAMINATION

There is no uniform final examination (occupying two consecutive hours) in either English 101 or 102. Instructors in 101, however, should plan to devote the last two meetings to a final in-class exercise, which in most instances ought to be based on or originate from the readings assigned during the term. It should not be a test of memory, but an invitation to the student to write on some statement or subject, chosen by him (or by the instructor) from the readings. At the next-to-last class the student should choose his subject (if the instructor has not told him to choose his subject before that class), outline his paper, and prepare a first draft. He should then hand in what he has done, and the instructor should return his materials to him (without commenting on them) at the start of the last class of the semester. During this class the student should finish his final theme and hand it in. This final essay should test those skills that the course has been trying to develop: the student's ability to read intelligently and evaluate responsibly one or more pieces of expository prose; his ability to design and control a short theme (300-500 words) that has a thesis and achieves a specific purpose; his ability to write economical, effective sentences and coherent, well developed paragraphs; and his ability to render abstractions as concrete as necessary and to support general statements with well-selected, accurately reported evidence.

For their final class essays some instructors assign short passages from essays previously read, and ask students to explain, then evaluate with the aid of good evidence, the ideas contained in one of the passages.

TERM GRADES

Since freshman English seeks to develop in the student habits of thinking and writing that he may not have had at the start of the course, term grades should be based on the student's achievement at the end of the course rather than his mistakes at the beginning. The final grade, therefore, should be based on the last four or five themes (the final in-class essay being taken as one of these four or five). The longer multi-source papers in 102, of course, may receive considerable weight even if the papers come in relatively early in the term. If the student has missed an in-class theme without excuse, or has failed to hand in a required theme during the semester, this fact should be reflected in his grade (possibly by deducting one half-grade from what he would otherwise have earned, for every paper not submitted).

A student's grade should be based primarily on his written work. Instructors may, if they wish, count effective classroom participation as a way of raising the grade of a marginal student, but they ought not to penalize students for failure to speak up in class.

Instructors should take attendance informally and report to the Dean of Student Personnel any student who is chronically absent from class. But no automatic reduction of grade should be made for classes missed. If the student was able to turn in acceptable themes on time without coming to class, he may not have needed the classes; in any event, the only loser was the student himself, who sacrificed the opportunity for self-improvement.

In English 101 particularly, the line between D and F is significant and sometimes hard to draw. But the final grade of D should not be awarded simply to "give the instructor another semester to work with the student," or because the student has been pleasant and congenial. The student should pass 101 only if the instructor is satisfied that he has learned enough to give him a fair chance of passing 102 also. The student whose work in 101 is inferior should receive a final grade of F and should repeat the course.

No student should receive a grade of I ("Incomplete") without prior approval from the director of the course. Incompletes can be awarded only to students who have missed a portion of the term's work, have a valid excuse (illness, a death in the family) for missing it, and show reasonable promise of completing the missed work satisfactorily -- by Easter (for Incompletes awarded in the fall semester) or by Thanksgiving (for Incompletes awarded in the spring semester). An Incomplete not removed by the time specified becomes, under University rules, an F.

A student who simply disappears from class always receives F, not I, unless he withdraws officially from the course.

Grades reported in freshman English at the seven-week point in each term should also be based on the most recent three or four papers, with adjustments for missing papers as indicated above.

Final grades and grade distribution sheets should be handed in to the director of the course on the date specified, usually 48-72 hours after the last meeting of the course. Grades are reported on IBM punched cards. The left side of the card is used for mid-semester grades, the right side for final grades. The grades indicated on each card should be carefully checked before the cards are given to the director. If a grade is changed after being recorded on a card, the instructor should initial the change. No cards should be returned without grades.

No student receives W or WF unless he has officially withdrawn from the course; official withdrawals are announced to instructors on a special form.

When giving an Incomplete, an instructor should fill out -- in quintuplicate -- a "Report of Incomplete," available from the departmental secretary. The report forms appear to have been devised mainly to discourage instructors from attempting to award Incompletes!

There will be further discussion of grading problems at staff meetings during the semester. A suggested grading standard will be distributed and discussed.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism, taking material from a book or article or from the work of a fellow student without acknowledging the borrowing, is the most serious offense a student can commit in a writing course. At the beginning of the semester, students should be warned against plagiarism; advice on the inside panels of the theme folder should provide sufficient warning, but instructors ought to call explicit attention to this advice. Instructors should report clearly proven or strongly suspected cases of plagiarism to the director of the course, who will take or suggest appropriate action. The usual penalty is an automatic F for the course; but the offender can be dropped from the University at the discretion of his dean. Papers markedly different in style or quality of thought from the student's normal accomplishment, or papers containing ideas not likely to have entered the student's mind through ordinary (or assigned reading) may lead an instructor to suspect plagiarism. Although an instructor who does suspect plagiarism should not accuse the student of the offense directly unless he has proof, he may properly ask the student to identify the sources of his material, and, if the student admits substantial borrowings from printed or other sources, the instructor can point out that his behavior constitutes plagiarism.

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

Instructors will find stencils and ditto masters in the cabinet in Room 413. They should cut and run off their own stencils and ditto masters; Lorraine (the department secretary) or Arlene (her assistant) will demonstrate the use of the duplicating machines for anyone who asks. An overhead projector is available for use in most classrooms equipped with a screen; if your room has no screen, the Department has a portable screen you can use. Both projector and screen are locked up in Room 415; Lorraine will give you access to them, but will expect you to return them after you finish using them. Lorraine will also show you how to make transparencies for use with the overhead projector. Typewriters can be found in Room 411 (in the classroom building), which is kept locked. If you wish to use one of these typewriters, get the key from Lorraine. And please return it.

(Note: overhead projectors, well and imaginatively used, can be most helpful in demonstrating to students problems and solutions in the writing of paragraphs and sentences.)

OBSERVATION AND ASSISTANCE OF NEW STAFF

Shortly after the term begins, a committee of experienced teachers of freshmen will begin a program of observation and assistance of new staff. The program will include prearranged visits to classes, examination and discussion of theme assignments, and examination of graded themes. Committee members will discuss their progress with staff members regularly, and will be glad to discuss with new staff members any problems or situations on which they may want advice. The observers submit to the director of the course a report of their work with each new teacher, a copy of the report is given to the new teacher.

The committee is guided by the questions listed under "Guides Used in Assistance of New Staff," which is included in the "Supplementary Instructional Materials." Staff members are welcome to suggest changes or additions to this list.

STAFF MEETINGS

After the orientation meetings at the beginning of the semester, there will be weekly staff meetings for about six weeks. Thereafter, meetings will be less frequent, usually on a Tuesday or Thursday at 12:30. These meetings will be devoted mostly to discussing desirable procedures and emphases in teaching, to explaining topics of instruction, and to reviewing sample student themes. Staff members are welcome to suggest subjects for discussion at these meetings.

STAFF CONFERENCE ROOMS

A coffee urn is available for the use of staff members in Kuykendall 726, which, though small, is an informal gathering place for members of the department. Books about composition, and other books of general interest to members of the department, may be consulted in the Carleton Green Memorial Library (Kuykendall 402), which is open during hours announced by the chairman of the department.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE COURSE

Mr. Larson, the director of English 101-102, has his office in Kuykendall 419. He welcomes the opportunity to talk with staff members and receive their suggestions about the content and administration of the course.

Major issues of course policy (including, principally, the objectives of instruction and the texts to be used) are decided by the Freshman English Committee, which is composed partly of appointed members and partly of members elected by the staff, the Committee is chaired by Mr. Larson. Most of the Committee's work occurs at the time when texts must be selected (late in October, early in May); except at these times, the Committee meets once a month every month (usually on the first Tuesday). Occasionally the Committee calls upon members of the teaching staff for assistance, particularly in the evaluation of proposed texts. The Committee regularly reports to the staff the results of its meetings.

All staff members are invited to mention to any member of the Committee matters that they would like the Committee to discuss. In 1967-68, members of the Freshman English Committee are:

John Conner

Donald deFano

John Freimarck

James Gray

William Huntsberry

Ian MacMillan

Robert Onopa

Paul Stern

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

FRESHMAN ENGLISH PROGRAM

INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTORS - PART B

OBJECTIVES, EMPHASES, AND POSSIBLE ASSIGNMENTS FOR ENGLISH 101

(1967-68)

CONTENTS:

I. TEXTS AND MATERIALS

II. OBJECTIVES: GENERAL AND PARTICULAR

III. SOME RECURRING EMPHASES OF INSTRUCTION

IV. A POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENT OF WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

September, 1967

PART B

I.

TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Texts:

For all sections:

Dorothy Van Ghent and Willard Maas, The Essential Prose, Shorter Edition (Bobbs-Merrill, 1966)

For those sections whose instructors elect to use them (enough copies have been ordered to supply all students, but they will not be put out for sale until after first classes, so that only those instructors who wish to use one or both of these can ask students to buy them):

Manuel Bilsky, Patterns of Argument (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston; paperbound)

Robert Gorrell and Charlton Laird, Modern English Handbook (Prentice-Hall, 1967 edition)

Recommended for all sections:

A desk dictionary, either:

Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (G. and C. Merriam) OR

Webster's New World Dictionary (Random House) OR

Funk and Wagnalls' Standard College Dictionary (Harcourt, Brace, and World)

Other Materials:

University of Hawaii Theme Folder (25¢ at the Bookstore)

II.

OBJECTIVES: GENERAL AND PARTICULAR

The principal purpose of English 101 and 102 -- the purpose that the deans of the various colleges expect us to achieve -- is *to help students learn to write good English expository prose*. We are not commissioned to teach political theory or sophisticated techniques of literary criticism. If he needs or desires them, the student can study these subjects in other courses. Our students, to be sure, may at some time write papers about politics or analyses of a literary work, and we may need to discuss a few political theories with them briefly, or to introduce on occasion some elementary methods of literary analysis, so that what they write will be reasonably sound. But we must remember that our discussions of *subject matter* in expository essays or of critical approaches to literature -- however interesting they may be to us -- ought always to serve the larger goal of helping the students to write better.

To name the overall objective is easy enough, but it does not identify our duties very sharply; we need to particularize. By the end of English 101 our students should be able to produce a clean text and a clear text. They should be able to write a paper -- not necessarily a long one: a couple of typed pages of good prose should be quite a satisfactory length in January -- that is neat in appearance and reasonably free of ungrammatical sentences and unidiomatic expressions (i.e., a paper that is "clean"). They should be able to attract the reader's attention to a worthwhile statement about an essay (or essays) that they have read, or about events or conditions they have seen, and develop this statement *clearly* according to some elementary principle order. They should know how to adopt a role or a "voice" appropriate to their purpose and their relationship to the reader, and to maintain this role, or make deliberate changes in it, as they develop their essays. They should know how to choose and carry out a strategy for the presentation of their ideas.

To help the students meet these goals, we must perform several tasks, of which helping students to eliminate errors in grammar and idiom is only one -- and indeed a minor one. Since we shall ask the student to develop a worthwhile statement according to some principle of order, we must help him to recognize when a statement is "worthwhile" and to see what it means to "develop" a "statement." To accomplish the latter, we must help the student learn how to find ("invent") material for presentation and decide which of this material to include. We must help him learn to understand the meanings of the words he uses, and show him how to manage the "predications" as well as the structure of his sentences so that each sentence presents with due emphasis the ideas he wishes to convey. Also, we must help him learn how to assure that each sentence and each paragraph makes a purposeful contribution to his entire essay.

To show him these things, we shall have to analyze statements made and structures found in essays written by professionals. We shall have to give students a good deal of practice in finding material for presentation. We shall also want to subject what he has written to *careful* analysis -- in our comments, in class and in interviews -- so that the student can recognize the responsibilities he accepts in making different kinds of statements and can see how to discharge the commitments he makes to his reader when he writes these statements.

Moreover, since we expect students to be able to comment on ideas and strategies in what they read, we have to be sure that they can grasp the substance, identify the structure, and understand the language of what they read. Since we expect them to discuss intelligently events and conditions they have seen around them, we must begin, at least, to help them make sound observations about what they see. (We can use essays for this purpose, too, by showing how the professional writers we are studying made observations and judgments about what they saw around them.) An important step in the process of making sound statements about what one reads or what one sees is the movement from the specific detail to the generalization or evaluation, or vice versa; therefore we need to help students see the connection between the general and the specific, between an abstraction and the concrete particulars it may embrace.

Finally, I think, we need to remind our students that they write to be read, and that their writing is inevitably a revelation of themselves (their personalities, their attitudes toward their world and toward their readers). We may encourage students to capitalize on this fact, for their writing will always be more distinctive and engaging if they realize that they need not try completely to detach themselves from their subjects. Instead of letting themselves be faceless ciphers, they should try to reveal a personality in their prose, while still preserving logical soundness, order, and clarity. While fostering clarity and order we ought not to encourage sterile, self-effacing anonymity.

These general objectives for the course in freshman composition help us to plan a program for English 101. The following pages try to suggest a program for English 101 in the coming year. This bulletin suggests desirable emphases and enumerates possible assignments, but does not try to compile a tight syllabus. Within the framework suggested, there should be enough variety and permissiveness to allow instructors to teach the best they know how. But all staff members should seek the same goals for 101 (and later 102), so that we can be sure that we are all teaching roughly the same matters during each term. The Freshman English Committee has agreed upon the following goals, and urges all staff members to have them in mind when they plan assignments.

OBJECTIVES OF FRESHMAN ENGLISH (1967-68)

During both semesters, the student should learn:

to read expository essays with sufficient understanding so that he can summarize them accurately, describe their structure, and evaluate the reasonableness of what they say;

to decide the substance, structure, and style of his essays so that they will all be appropriate to the occasion of writing, the intended audience, and the desired prupose.

In the first semester (English 101), the student should learn:

to explain and interpret, in some detail, statements made in essays read, or in newspapers or magazines;

to make sound evaluations of his experiences and observations;

to evaluate the soundness of his own arguments and those of other writers, by appraising the evidence they use, the premises or assumptions from which they begin, and the steps in their reasoning -- in particular:

(a) to recognize where a writer's reasoning depends on assumptions or unstated premises, to evaluate the reasonableness of these premises, and to determine their importance in the writer's reasoning;

II.

(b) to recognize generalizations and to test the reasonableness of these generalizations;

(c) to recognize the differences between facts, opinions, and statements of preference, and to support and evaluate these statements as appropriate;

(d) to determine the reasonableness of statements that imply casual relationships, or relationships of antecedent and consequent (if...then);

(e) to evaluate prediction statements (statements that say what will happen in future time);

to use, as needed, the various techniques and procedures for defining concrete and abstract words, and to use both kinds of words precisely and discriminatingly in developing his ideas;

to divide a subject into parts so that the subject can be treated in a coherent essay;

to adjust the structure of his sentences to suit the purpose and emphasis in each sentence;

to achieve order in his paragraphs and essays;

to establish and sustain an appropriate "tone of voice" in his own essays, whether those essays are largely descriptive and narrative or expository and interpretive.

The objectives in English 102 can also be given here to show staff members how the year as a whole has been planned.

In the second semester (English 102), the student should learn:

to argue well in favor of an interpretation of present conditions and completed events (these may include works of imaginative literature);

to argue well in support of a proposed course of action (to be taken in future time);

to assemble data and opinions from three or four different sources to assist an inquiry or support a thesis;

to recognize some of the features of language that make up what we call "style," and to vary his style according to the occasion and purpose of writing.

III.

SOME RECURRING EMPHASES IN INSTRUCTION

A word of explanation may be needed about the second of the two objectives (in the preceding section) that apply to both semesters. In the planning of assignments and the marking of papers, we should seek to draw from the students papers that are more than mechanically correct and stylistically safe; we should seek papers in which the student establishes a distinctive identity and arouses the interest of his reader. The student must learn that in whatever he writes he assumes an identity and a point of view (or "stance": several metaphors are used to describe his way of looking at his subject and his relationship with his audience). That identity and point of view must be appropriate to the writing task he has been given. Hence the insistence on "voice" and "tone" in the discussion of suggested assignments for early in the semester (Part IV, below). See TE 500 064

The most promising approach being investigated today (by teachers who work extensively in composition courses) is to treat the act of writing (whatever the subject or form) not simply as a skill, but as an art, an art that requires the student to make many decisions about the design of his sentences and paragraphs. This art is mastered only when the student learns to choose wisely both what to say and how to say it. This approach teaches composition from the perspective of rhetoric: the art of deciding the content, structure, and style of a piece of writing so that they are appropriate to the audience addressed and the purpose to be served by writing. (See diagram, next page.) The student should be encouraged to decide quite deliberately what ideas, what organizational plan, what words, idioms, and sentence patterns will best accomplish the purpose he seeks with the audience addressed (instructors, fellow students, or hypothetical "outsider" -- friend, supervisor, colleague, parent, etc., as named in the assignment).

If we are to take this approach, we accept the obligation to specify, with most of our assignments, the purpose that the student is to serve ("to write a good paper," however practical it may be, is not as useful a purpose as "to inform," "to convince," "to defend," etc.) and the audience to whom he should write (certainly the teach, if possible the class as a whole, and, on occasion, a real or fictitious individual or group about whose interests and attitudes the student knows something). Instead of saying just "write a comparison," can we say on occasion something like this: "Compare your high school student government group with that in your college, in such a way as to show the advisor to the college group why you think your high school had a better program of student government," and "Enumerate the benefits of belonging to the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii in such a way as to convince your parents that they should pay some membership "fee," or "in such a way as to convince your high school classmate that he should join." Can we, that is, give the student in at least some assignments an "identity" and a reason for writing? If our fellow teachers of composition are right, this procedure should lead to more vivid and more distinctive papers.

Can we also bear in mind, ad we read papers, that the student should have a purpose for writing each sentence and paragraph, and can we formulate some of our criticisms in terms of how clear and how useful the purpose is, as well as in terms of how successfully that purpose has been carried out? If our students can get into the habit, as they write, of checking each sentence and each paragraph to be sure that it accomplishes something -- plays a useful role -- in its context, they may have a powerful tool to assist them in revising their first drafts for coherence and emphasis before they turn them in. They may even learn to revise and rearrange their ideas before committing themselves to a first draft; helping students acquire skill in revising as they write is a major goal of the teacher of writing.

III.

A DIAGRAMMATIC VIEW OF THE ARTS OF "RHETORIC"

RHETORIC
IS
THE
ART
OF
SELECTING
THE

ideas or substance

structure (arrangement of materials)

style (manner of expression)

including:

words (diction)
figures of speech
sentence structure
(length, syntactic patterns,
rhythms, etc.)

SO
THAT
THEY
ARE
APPROPRIATE
TO

the subject, as perceived by the writer:

- what it requires
- what it will permit

the available data

the audience addressed:

- its background
- its interests
- its attitudes

the social circumstances under which the writing/speaking takes place

the emotional pressures of the moment, if any

the purposes for which the writer writes

the writer's powers and their limitations

THE WRITER (OR) SPEAKER) IS A MAKER OF DECISIONS. HE DECIDES:
from all that could be said: WHAT SHOULD BE SAID
from all the possible ways of organizing his ideas: HOW TO ARRANGE AND INTERCONNECT HIS IDEAS
from all the possible ways of saying what he has to say: HOW TO EXPRESS HIS IDEAS IN WORDS

[NOTE:
DESCRIPTION, NARRATION, EXPOSITION, AND ARGUMENT ARE BEST VIEWED NOT AS SEPARATE KINDS OF WRITING, BUT AS TECHNIQUES OR TOOLS ON WHICH THE WRITER DRAWS WHEN THEY ARE APPROPRIATE. THESE TECHNIQUES MAY BE PRACTICED IN ISOLATION, BUT THE STUDENT OUGHT TO KNOW HOW TO USE THEM, SINGLY OR IN COMBINATION, TO SUIT HIS PURPOSES IN ANY SITUATION IN WHICH WRITING IS CALLED FOR.]

PART B

III.

In the process of insisting that students make wise rhetorical decisions, we should also lead them to recognize the importance of using specific details to illustrate and elaborate generalizations and value judgments. Freshmen are prone to generalize, to employ abstract nouns and verbs without relating them to concrete data precisely observed. They need continually to be reminded that generalizations are only as good as the data from which they are drawn, that conclusions can be accepted only if the evidence that warrants them is provided, and that abstract diction is only as useful as the particular details that reveal what is covered by the abstraction. Where the students generalize, therefore, our comments should require the supporting particulars. Where they draw conclusions, we should insist upon evidence. Where they move readily up the ladder of abstraction, we should ask them to move as easily and as readily down the same ladder. If the generalizations just offered arouse skepticism, look for the supporting particulars in the papers on your first assignments.

What has been said here has one important implication for us as teachers. It tells us that we have the right to say to students "that is wrong and this is right," or "you should not have done this, you should have done that." We can only point out to students the effects on their readers, and the evident appropriateness or inappropriateness to the occasion and purpose of writing, of the ideas they have presented, the principles arrangement they have used, the manner of expression they have selected. We can offer suggestions about possible alternative ways of organizing an essay or a sentence, and we can say (we should say) why we think the alternative might work better than what the student initially wrote. But we can only suggest changes; it is up to the student to decide whether the suggested changes do or do not help him to achieve his purposes better than what he did in his first effort.

The student is the judge of how best to express his ideas. Our task is to help him make better judgments. To be sure, we must express our opinions of his judgments in terms of a final grade, but our main task is to help him make wiser choices about content, design, and expression.

IV.

A POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENT OF WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

It would be impossible to design one particular course outline that would surely serve the objectives and sustain the emphases just enumerated better than any other course outline. Different instructors with different tastes in reading assignments and different techniques of teaching can without doubt meet these objectives and emphases equally well in their own way. The Freshman English Committee hopes that all instructors, whether novices or veterans, will plan their own courses and experiment with their own assignments, always bearing in mind the objectives that we must all agree to serve in our teaching.

New instructors, however, may want some assistance in the planning of work for their sections. To help those who want such assistance, the director of the course has prepared the following general observations about possible course designs for this year, and has suggested a number of assignments which would serve the objectives of the course. These assignments, the director emphasizes, will have a chance to work well only if they are given after students had had the necessary preparation for them, and if they are administered clearly, so that students know what their tasks were and what obstacles they might encounter in performing those tasks.

In the last three years, English 101 has been divided roughly into two parts: the first part, lasting about six weeks, has been devoted to frequent short assignments (submitted on an average of once a week); the second part, covering the remainder of the semester, has been devoted to somewhat longer assignments (submitted every fourth or fifth meeting), so that by the end of the semester the student was regularly writing two to three typed pages on each assignment. This strategy was based on the assumption that most entering freshmen were inexperienced and ineffective writers who could profit from frequent short exercises in writing before tackling more complex assignments. When first introduced, this strategy was probably wise, but as the competence in writing exhibited by the entering freshmen has improved, the need for a series of short assignments at the beginning has decreased. There is also evidence that instructors' requests for brevity have inhibited some students' reasonable desires to write at greater length, while discouraging others from searching thoroughly for ideas to include in their themes.

Accordingly, in the suggested program that follows, no distinction is made between the first weeks and the last weeks of the semester. From the start of the semester, assignments ought probably be required at intervals of four or five meetings (to allow time for students to rewrite themes after the instructor has annotated them). The instructor may hope -- and indeed ask -- for gradual increases in the length of students' papers, but these increases need not (probably should not) be abrupt. Moreover, instructors may find it preferable to let the student write as much as he thinks necessary on the subject rather than specifying a minimum (or a maximum) number of words. To specify a minimum number of words may invite the student who can present his ideas in fewer words to pad his piece; to specify an absolute maximum may prevent the student with a large number of relevant ideas from doing as good a job on the assignment as he could.

It may seem that in abandoning the distinction between the first and second parts of the semester, the proposed program also does away with those divices that would protect the instructor against the unbridled effusiveness or sheer verbosity that students unrestrained by word limits may exhibit. There are, however, some controls that an instructor may use less risk than arbitrary designations of length would entail. One is to regulate the complexity of the task that the writer must perform. Professional writers and student writers alike perform varying numbers of operations in their essays; generally speaking, it may require less space to perform one or two operations than to perform five or six, if each of the five or six is as demanding as each of the one or two. It will take even a reasonably acute observer, for example, far less space simply to describe the physical appearance of, say, a building, than to describe it, giving the reasons why it has that appearance, summarize other people's views of the building, define an aesthetic standard that can be applied to the building, and evaluate the building's appearance thoroughly in light of that standard. Instructors may find it useful to arrange their courses in order of the number of tasks to be performed by the writer. Give one or two tasks at most in assignments at the beginning, then give more tasks in assignments at the middle and near the end. The length of the student's papers may increase as the number of tasks increases, but even if the papers are not longer, they will have to be more skillful and complex. And it is, after all, skill in handling complex responsibilities that we want our students to develop.

A second method of controlling (or varying) the length of a student's essay is to encourage more (or less) invention of material. The more material the student has (and the more of this material that is relevant to his purpose), the longer the student's piece may be. It probably takes less time to describe the function of a specific instrument, for example, than to evaluate the views on a given issue of a writer who is represented in the anthology by three or four relevant essays. So restrict (or enlarge) the amount of material, and limit (or extend) the amount of invention required, as ways of affecting the length of the essays you receive.

A final method of controlling the length of your students' essays is to vary the rhetorical context (the "occasion") in which they imagine themselves writing. Let the students respond to different audiences that demand pieces of varying lengths. A letter to the editor of a magazine, for example, usually has to be short if it is to have hopes of publication, and a summary of the argument of a professional essay, designed for a very busy reader, would also want to be rather brief. On the other hand a petition addressed to the student council or the president of the university might be rather long, because it might need to elaborate and explain crucial issues and not be subject to severe limitations of space. Students will do well to practice adjusting the length of their essays to suit the needs of different audiences and occasions. In giving the students this practice, the instructor can teach many lessons about selection of material and expression of ideas while keeping the essays to lengths he can manage to read effectively.

Nothing has been said in this section about stipulating the number of paragraphs a student should write -- and nothing much can be said except to discourage it. Although in past years this bulletin has suggested that assignments be made in terms of number of paragraphs, the evidence provided by student and professional writing discourages the belief that a paragraph is a unit of composition by which the length of an essay can be measured. A student may punctuate the same number of sentences as one paragraph or as three, and, so long as he keeps together ideas so tightly related that separation would obscure his thought, a reader has to accept his decision. (The reader may still believe, of course, that combining several paragraphs into one, or dividing one paragraph into several, might for specific reasons be more effective in context.) In first draft, the first two paragraphs of this section (IV) appeared as one paragraph; the division into two paragraph was made for rhetorical reasons -- for emphasis on how this section might help new instructors. It seems impossible to stipulate the number of paragraphs that are to be used to do a job of writing; one can assign the writing task, but the number of paragraphs the writer uses must be his decision.

Nor does it seem reasonable to prescribe an ideal or "standard" structure for a paragraph, if the length (and hence much of the structure) of his paragraphs is to be chosen by the writer after consideration of his purpose and the context in which he is writing. The concepts traditionally used to teach the paragraph -- the notions of topic sentence, pattern of development, a clincher sentence -- seem inadequate. Writers of textbooks using these concepts often fail to make clear whether a "topic sentence" simply announces the subject of the paragraph, or states a "thesis," or is only more abstract or general than other sentences. More often than not, the so-called "topic sentence" is supposed to state the thesis to be developed in that paragraph, but there are well-written paragraphs in which no thesis, as such, is stated, and there are well-written paragraphs in which the supposed "topic sentence" actually introduces the subject matter of _two or three_ paragraphs to follow. The traditional listings of six or eight "methods of development" in a paragraph are scarcely adequate to describe many well-written paragraphs that one can find in the work of professional writers; anyway, these traditional methods often interpenetrate in complex ways within a paragraph, and most texts do not allow adequately for their collaboration. Finally, many good paragraphs have no "clincher sentence," despite the admonitions of some textbooks that students' paragraphs must have them.

Francis Christensen, whose essay "A Generative Rhetoric of the Paragraph" (_College Composition and Communication_, October, 1965) also points out the inadequacies of traditional concepts of paragraph structure, proposes that paragraphs be viewed as sequences of "structurally related sentences," each sentence either coordinate with some earlier sentence or subordinate to the sentence that immediately precedes it. But Christensen's effort to specify which sentences in particular paragraphs are coordinate and which subordinate often gets a reader into dilemmas that in no way aid his understanding of the paragraphs, and his suggested applications of his theories to the teaching of paragraph construction amount to little more than advice to add particular details to make abstract, general statements more precise and vivid. Teachers of composition do not need Christensen's theories to illuminate the need for particular examples and concrete details to balance and elaborate generalizations.

Others besides Christensen have tried to refresh, and at the same time to preserve, the notion that the paragraph has an identifiable structure. One group in particular, the "tagmemic" theorists (under Kenneth Pike, Richard Young and Alton Becker of the University of Michigan) holds that a paragraph comprises an arrangement of "slots" that have been filled with different kinds of material -- i.e., that each paragraph conforms to a pattern, and that one can enumerate the possible patterns that may be found in good paragraphs. For example, they suggest that the first sentence of a paragraph constitutes a "slot" that can be "filled" by a _statement of the thesis_ of the paragraph, that the second sentence may be a _restatement_ or _restriction_ of the first, and that the remainder of the paragraph is a large "slot" that can be "filled" with _illustrative material_. This pattern, which the tagmemic theorists summarize as Thesis-Restatement-Illustration (or TRI, for short), is but one of many possible patterns; the tagmemicists are at work on an inventory of the possibilities. Their search for patterns in the paragraphs of professional writers may bear fruit, but until their work is complete, a teacher cannot assess its values. The implications of their work for the classroom teaching -- if there are such implications -- also remain to be pointed out.

At the moment, the most useful approach to the study of the paragraph may be that of Robert Gorrell, who holds that in the opening sentences of a paragraph (as in the opening sentences of an essay) the writer makes a commitment to his reader about the subject, purpose, and scope of what will follow. The writer is obligated to honor this commitment (or to show cause why he will not fulfill it). Of course, he must understand the extent and quality of his commitment before he can try to discharge it. Thus a writer may develop his essay in part by discovering what commitments he wishes to (or can) make, and how each commitment may be discharged. In turn, he may test his essay as a whole (and his separate paragraphs) to determine whether he has honored his commitment, and may revise his work to assure that he has honored the commitment as efficiently and as gracefully as possible. This theory has the advantage of forcing the student to choose the ground on which he will stand before his reader and then to maintain it -- a requirement quite in keeping with our "rhetorical emphasis" in the teaching of composition. One test of a good paragraph becomes: have I kept faith with my audience in dealing with my subject.

Complementary to his theory of commitment and discharge is the notion that each sentence in a paragraph, and each paragraph in an essay, plays a particular role which can be characterized -- e.g., asserting, illustrating, describing, summarizing. Some sentences may even play two or more roles, depending upon the context. (For a fuller listing and definition of important functions a sentence or paragraph may play, see "The Functioning of Sentences in Paragraphs," in "Supplementary Instructional Materials" [Part C of the documents for the Freshman English Program]). From this view of paragraphs and essays, it follows that each sentence in a paragraph must serve a function that can be identified, and must serve it well, but that a writer has a wide choice of the functions he may wish to serve in each successive sentence.

Taken together, these last two concepts suggest that if the writer keeps his commitment to his reader, makes clear the function of each sentence, sees to it that each sentence performs its work well, keeps together ideas that are closely related, and breaks paragraphs in such a way as to give appropriate emphasis to important ideas, his piece will probably be effectively paragraphed. This view of paragraphs has the advantage of recognizing that the length and complexity of the paragraphs in a given piece is a rhetorical decision (rather than the result of adherence to a fixed pattern for paragraph construction), and that within the same essay paragraph breaks may appear at different points for different emphases.

Since written discourse is broken into paragraphs, we have to find a way of dealing with the presence of paragraph breaks. The notions suggested in the last three paragraphs above may be the most useful we now have. They do explain, moreover, why it seems unwise to make theme assignments in terms of number of paragraphs, or to try to teach the paragraph as a basic unit of composition.

But if the paragraph cannot honestly be taught as a basic unit of composition, the sentence probably has to be so taught, because writers compose in sentences, and good writers design their sentences carefully. In English 101 we can give a good deal of emphasis simply to writing good sentences. Part of a class period might be spent occasionally on the writing -- and rewriting and rewriting -- of a single sentence of description or narration or comparison or summary. From readings in the anthologies, we can draw to students' attention the different ways in which a sentence may assert, and the differences in emphasis due to different kinds of structure. We can show students the same things from their own sentences (using projection transparencies and dittoed compilations of sentences), and we can in commenting on papers show how some sentences do their work well while some do not. For a sentence, like a paragraph or a whole theme, is a rhetorical instrument, and our students should learn how to use sentences wisely. For a full discussion of how to assign and discuss exercises in writing single sentences, see Jackson

Burgess, "Sentence by Sentence" in College Composition and Communication, December, 1963. Exercises in writing single sentences probably ought not to have the prominence Burgess would give them, but Burgess' methods of analyzing sentences may be instructive.

In the program which follows (beginning on the next page), therefore, the suggested kinds of assignments are stated in terms of the task that the student is to perform -- what he must accomplish, his goal -- and not in terms of number of words or number of paragraphs. The tasks, which require the student to use quite different skills to accomplish them, are listed roughly in ascending order of difficulty or complexity, as the director of the course perceives it. The kinds of assignments are stated in general terms; each assignment can be repeated, if the teacher should wish, in reference to different bodies of subject matter. More kinds of assignments are listed than any teacher can use; the teacher who wishes to follow this plan for achieving the objectives of the course must choose which assignments he wants to use as well as the precise subject matter to which each assignment will be applied and the audience to be addressed and the purpose to be served by each assignment. (The assignments starred are recommended somewhat more highly than the others, though all are appropriate for 101.) The teacher must also decide what readings, if any, to discuss in connection with each assignment; no readings from Van Ghent and Maas are specifically required of all students in the class, since the purpose of the course is to develop students' skill in writing, not to assure that he has read particular works by particular authors. Of the first four assignments (which have several variations) probably not more than three should be used before the student is given the more abstract and demanding assignments that follow.

IV.

(1)

to state an opinion (of an object, event, essay, etc.) and give reasons for holding that opinion. This kind of assignment establishes at the beginning of the course one of our main emphases: the relation between belief and reasons for belief, between general ideas and supporting particulars. It admits of simple enumerative analysis, where the student presents in good order, but without extensive explanation, a series of ideas that are related in defense of a judgment. In assigning the paper, instructors should ask students simply to strive for clear statement, and orderly movement, and to give reasons that really do support the initial judgment. And instructors might judge students' papers mainly on these three criteria. This assignment might well be repeated in reference to material outside Walden Two: contemporary material, for example. Instances: "Freshman orientation does/does not help to introduce students to college work because ..." or "Assigning sections at the same time freshmen are being advised is an innovation worth continuing ..." For themes on these assignments, the highest praise is that the writer makes the reader believe him; the severest criticism -- or one of the most severe -- is that the reasons are unconvincing.

(2)*

to describe a person, scene, building, etc., so that the reader gets a clear picture of the object described (or so that one implies, without stating, a judgment and an attitude toward the subject). Indeed, one quite useful assignment in description would require first a strictly objective report (with no inferences or value judgments implied), and then perhaps at the next class a description that will encourage the reader to form a judgment of the thing described. This could be an interesting exercise with which to begin the semester.

Discussion of student papers on such an assignment might include an effort to characterize the "voice" heard in each paper, and to determine whether thevoice is reasonably consistent throughout each. Discussion would also focus, of course, on what features of language establish the peculiar "voice" heard. This kind of assignment has in the past proved interesting and difficult for students (the more difficult part is the strictly objective report); it would have to be prepared for by careful discussion of the difference between the kind of language appropriate to a neutral observer and the kind of language that characterizes or implies the speaker's attitudes.

(3)

to narrate a succession of events reasonably familiar to the student. This narrative, too, can be strictly neutral or it can be an effort to assign causes for the events. In the latter case, the paper would be analytical without being personal. And the narrative can be an effort to record events so as to reveal an attitude toward them or a judgment about them. In the process of doing this last, of course, the writer will also reveal an identify and personality, and the class might discuss how he does so.

As with the assignment in description, all three kinds of narrative pieces can be assigned, so as to show the contrast of voices and the kinds of language that produce the contrast. Another version of the assignment might ask the student to write the same narration from different roles. He might, for example, narrate the events in the same scientific experiment first as if he were much interested in the subject and convinced of the importance of the experiment, and then as if he were convinced that he would never be a "scientist" and that doing the experiment was futile. The class, of course, could discuss the differences in language employed in the two accounts, and how the voices were created.

(4)

to tell an event in their own experience that was of great emotional significance for them, but to tell it in such a way as to imply rather than to state baldly the emotional importance attaching to the event. An autobiographical theme early in the course, in fact, might have considerable value in informing the instructor about each student as well as in teaching students the effects of different linguistic choices.

Another variant of the autobiographical theme might be an assignment in which students could tell rather briefly about some significant feature of their upbringing (this might be a generalized narration -- covering many particular incidents -- rather than narration of a single event). With a diversity of students writing about diverse features of upbringing, the number of identifiable voices in the class should be large, and it ought to be easy to show that each writer in writing assumes a distinctive identity as he writes.

(5)

to compress into a quarter (or less) of its length paragraphs of a longer essay, and/or a paraphrase in the student's own words a paragraph or two taken from an essay. This sort of an assignment, given early in the course, has three obvious advantages: it enables the instructor to focus on the skill of the student's in expressing ideas rather than on his ability to find ideas; it enables the instructor to teach accuracy in reading of prose -- a skill freshmen at most universities badly need; and it enables the instructor to compare papers on identical subjects and show the reasons for judging one superior to another. Instructors using this assignment should take care that students know what it means to summarize or to paraphrase. The writing of summary or paraphrase might be practiced in class before being assigned to students for outside work.

This assignment too, admits a comparison -- an exercise inproducing a "slanted" paraphrase, a paraphrase in the voice of one who reveals a feeling or judgment different from that of the original author. Comparison of a strict summary with a slanted summary might help students see how selection and emphasis, as well as words used, distinguish accurate from misleading interpretations of others' writing.

(6)

to explain and illustrate a trenchant saying. The saying might be given to the student as the first sentence of his theme; his task would be to paraphrase or restate, then to find historical events or personally observed events that illustrate (or contradict) the saying. An example might be Roosevelt's "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," or, if the instructor wanted to tease his students with a more challenging paradox. "The only sin is stupidity."

PART B

IV.

(7)*

to define briefly an unfamiliar term, or to differentiate two or more or less familiar terms that are similar in meaning (e.g., "rights" and "privileges"). In addition to defining by class term and differentiating features (if appropriate), the student might be asked to give appropriate illustrations of what the word applies to and what it does not apply to. Examples of successful definitions should be developed in class before students are asked to attempt one. Students should be cautioned especially against over-inclusive and over-restrictive definitions, and should be warned to choose their illustrations with great care. The term assigned should not be a highly complex abstraction.

(8)

to analyze a paragraph by a professional writer or by a fellow student. For such a paper -- admittedly an exercise, but worthwhile still as a way of showing how sentences in paragraphs work -- the technique of "functional analysis" might be employed. The student's task would be to show in writing, after some oral practice in class, what each sentence in an assigned paragraph does, how well it fills its role, and how well the writer has kept his commitment to his reader. The exercise would help encourage students to read prose close and to evaluate it carefully.

(9)

to defend a generalization by citing and explaining particular details. One responsibility of a course in composition, as has been suggested before, is to force the student to examine his generalizations, test them, and reformulate them as necessary. In this assignment the student should be asked to formulate a generalization, then to explain the statement in such a way as to make it seem plausible. For purposes of the assignment, we can define generalization as "a statement that ascribes some characteristic to or advances a single value judgment for all the items in a group." It will be hard for the student to prove a generalization (short of enumerating every item covered by it), but he should at least be asked to make sure that the examples or illustrations he uses are representative.

The instructor should probably specify the data or events about which a generalization is to be made, or he can give the students a choice of several groups of data. Topics may be drawn from literature, history, or government, for example. In this paper, longer than earlier exercises on generalization, more explanation can be expected from the student about why the particular data cited do indeed justify the generalization. The instructor should seek an audience, an occasion, and a purpose for the use of the generalization invited.

Generalizing is, of course, a species of induction; the student must work from particulars to the generalization. He must recognize that if any item in the group is not covered by the generalization, the generalization must be reformulated to make it accurate. He should not be allowed to generalize in such a way that exceptions to his statement are possible.

In this assignment the student may, if he wishes, start by discussing or describing the particular cases and use his generalization as a way of concluding.

(10)

to classify (or "divide") a group of objects for the purpose of learning something about them. "Classification" (more properly "division") invites the student to take a body of data or a group of items with something in common and divide the data or the items into classes. The principal purpose of the assignment is to help students learn to organize numerous data on any subject, but the assignment can also help students learn to break down some kinds of problems into sub-problems or smaller problems and attack the smaller problems one by one. (Thus the U.S. Army, trying to decide how to teach prisoners of war to resist temptation to collaborate with the enemy, might classify the men taken prisoner according to how they responded to the enticements of the enemy.) The rules about "division" are few and well-known: the same basis of dividing into classes must be used throughout the process (students in a class can be divided according to age, entrance exam scores, English grades, college in which they are enrolled -- but only on one of these bases at any one time); the division must be exhaustive (all items must fit into one of the classes); and the classes must be exclusive (an item must not be capable of being placed in more than one class).

Refinements on the basic assignment might include the following: (1) invite the students to apply successively two bases of division to the same group of items, and then encourage them to correlate the classes (do the older students have higher entrance exam scores on the average? do students in Arts and Sciences make better grades in English? -- one might not assign these topics, but they illustrate the principle); (2) encourage the students to attempt a generalization about the items studies after they have completed the classification. Ask them to consider whether dividing items into classes helps them to arrive at useful statements about the items as a group. Point out to them how, after their earlier efforts at defending generalizations, "division" can be a welcome solution to the problem of arriving at sound generalizations that can be cogently defended.

This procedure will be brand new to many students; it needs careful explanation and ample preliminary discussion. The assignment ought not to be described as an exercise in division. Give the student some data (e.g., about American presidents, Greek city-states, novels, poems, etc.) and a problem to solve in making sense out of them. Then show how division helps in solving that problem. Or give the student an assertion (one that requires dividing data into classes) and discuss ways of proving it. Show how division will help prove it, and how to use "division."

(11)

to describe an ongoing or completed process. One version of this assignment requires the student to explain how a recurrent series of events works to produce a result. (For example, how photosynthesis works, or what happens when we see a "nova" -- a "new star".) The student has to select a logical beginning point, give the successive steps (so that they will inform a reader unfamiliar with the process, though, of course, not so that he can "do" the process), indicate, where possible, the causal relationships involved, and tell how the steps reach their logical conclusion [or whatever ending point the

the writer has chosen]. His account must be accurate and complete.

A second version of the assignment invites the student to discuss a series of events that have accomplished their purpose or produced their results and are completed. (An illustration would be any sequence of events in recent or remote history, or in a novel or story or play.) Again the student's task is to inform -- just possibly, also, to pass judgment on the process -- and again he must pick a reasonable starting point, give a complete account of the steps involved, reveal causal relationships where possible, and show how the sequence brought about the final result. Order, completeness, and soundness of judgment are major virtues in such a paper.

Obviously these two assignments require the instructor to discuss causal relationships, and show how to check judgments of causality, before turning students loose.

Whichever assignment an instructor gives, he ought carefully to make clear what it entails and what it requires of the student by way of thinking and organizing. (The student, for example, must clearly break down the process into discrete component steps before he begins to write about it.) The assignment is common, but either version will trouble even good students. It should be introduced as an exercise in explaining to an uninformed reader how something works or how a result came about. The directive verbs might be "Tell how...." or "Trace the development of.... so as to show how...." or "Trace the development of .... and tell what resulted from its progress."

(12)

to describe a condition or group of circumstances, and then to indicate the significance of that condition. In this assignment the student is asked not merely to describe (with or without suggesting through is language an attitude toward what he is describing) a condition, and then find meaning in what he has described. Suitable subjects might include the workings of student government or the bureau of student activities at the university, the efforts of mainland students to find housing near the university, the mingling (or non-mingling) of different racial groups in some community, and so on. The student would report facts (drawn from personal experience and from the reports of others -- including published writers, whose reliability and reasonableness the student would have to assess) about the condition or circumstances he has chosen for his subject, derive some general statements summarizing his observations, and then point to the significance of what he has observed. "Significance" here might mean what the conditions he describes have caused or threaten to cause, but more likely the "significance" will be some feature of the university, or of a particular community, or of a particular class, to which the observed data point. For instance, the struggles of mainlanders to find housing locally may reveal the value they place on attending the University (that leads to the question: why do they value it?), the attitudes of local landlords toward students, differences between the housing preferences of mainland students and those of students from Hawaii, the ease (or difficulty) of attending school situated in a metropolitan area and lacking adequate dormitory facilities, and so on.

In administering this assignment, the instructor might point out that the pattern of describing and then discovering significance in what has been described is a favorite of professional essayists, and one that students might find it well to master for use in subjects outside English. The instructor would also need to tell students what is meant by "significance," and to give students some practice in class in discovering "significance" in things seen. Since a "significant" statement is likely to be at a fairly high level of generalization, the instructor might want also to discuss how a writer can move up the ladder of abstraction as he develops an essay. (Earlier assignments have asked the student to move *down* the ladder.) The instructor might also want to point out that one may find "significance" in what one sees now by comparing it with what one saw (or could have seen) years ago. The "significance" of a present condition, then, may be what it shows about historical evolution or changes in the way men (or machines) behave. This exercise, then, may require the student to use *comparison* functionally -- as well as a way of organizing exposition.

(13)*

to write a precis of an essay. A longer precis or summary might be assigned because of the continuing importance of training students to read expository prose accurately and intelligently, and because they can learn a good deal about a writer's thinking by trying to compress his essay into a small space -- including only the main points and leaving out all non-essentials. The assignment can be approached in one of two ways. One can require a "precis," by which we may mean a simple compression of the original essay into a fractio fraction of the length, in which the arrangement of material and the tone are preserved as nearly as possible. Or one can ask for a "summary," in which the student is free to follow his own ordering of ideas and to reveal the writer's emphases by means of his own choosing. The test in "summary" is whether the student does indeed understand the writer's main points and how the writer develops these main points. Another test, of course, is whether the student's essay has its own order and coherence, and whether he can sense the coherence of thought (if any) in the essay he is summarizing. This assignment needs to be explained and prepared for carefully. Compsing precis or summaries through class discussion may help.

For the purposes of this assignment one should use a fairly short essay. Assigning too long an essay for the first long summary or paraphrase will make the task of analysts so difficult for students that they may neglect their writing, and it will make the task of annotating the paper more difficult.

Students should realize, by the way, that this process is no arid exercise. Frequently they will need to write precis or summaries of other writers' work as part of longer pieces of their own.

(Some instructors may wish to elect assignment 13 or 14 but not both, unless they find that their students continue to have acute difficulty in reading even short essays accurately.)

(14)

to compare the substance (or technique) of two essays, so as to clarify or call attention to some important features of each. An assignment in comparison can serve several purposes. It can clarify features of each item compared; it can emphasize features of one or both items; it can permit evaluation that will lead to ranking the subjects in some order; it can even (though to use it thus is somewhat dangerous) be used to support argument. The assignment proposed here is designed principally to clarify, although the

the student need not be discouraged from trying to rank the essays if he has good grounds for doing so. The student should (or can) be asked to deal with two essays that treat similar themes or approach similar topics, and he can be asked to compare what the authors have to say about their subjects -- or, possibly, how they develop the themes they discuss. Presumably the student can either discuss each essay separately and then bring them together, or he can discuss each point of similarity/difference separately (treating both essays at once on each point), then provide a concluding summary. There are, of course, numerous variants of these two patterns.

The goal for teachers to bear in mind is that the theme should not be sterile exercise in a commonplace -- albeit important -- procedure. The writing of the essay should be a learning experience for the student: he should know the essays more thoroughly for having written the paper. He should be told that his reader is familiar with the essays, but has not studied them in depth. The writer's task, therefore, is to make perfectly clear and reasonable the conclusions from his comparison, and to inform the reader about some feature of the essays that would be less easily observed unless the essays were compared. Comparison, that is, should highlight the importance of features that might be overlooked.

Instructors may wish to use an essay and a poem or story instead of two essays on this assignment.

(15)*

to describe the structure of an essay, and to evaluate the aptness of that structure to the author's purpose. The assignment in adnalysis of structure, like the precis, is designed to give students practice in reading essays and in understanding what "structure" in exposition means. The essay assigned should have a fairly clearly identifiable structure, so that students will not be baffled by the concept of structure, about which few will have thought much before 101. They should understand, before they write, that in "analyzing," they are taking the essay apart in order to see what makes it "work" as a unit (analysis here has the constructive purpose of helping the analyst to *learn* more about the subject), and that a discussion of "structure" must reveal (a) the subject and thesis of the essay under study; (b) the parts into which the essay can be divided; (c) the plan or organizational principle that links the parts into a whole; (d) the connections of thought that tie the adjacent parts together and give coherence to the piece. This assignment asks the student to be more consicious of a writer's technique in presentation of thought than he was in writing a precis or summary.

Since most students have not previously thought of examining the "structure" of essays that they read, the technique of analyzing structure needs carefully to be explained and its application to an essay (perhaps not the one assigned, but another brief essay with a clear structure) demonstrated before students write.

(16)

to evaluate the reasoning used by the author of an argumentative essay in arriving at his conclusions. This assignment, which probably ought not to be given before mid-semester, would require the student to defend the reasoning found in an essay (the student might address someone unconvinced by the essay) or to qualify or refute the reasoning (the student might address someone initially impressed by the argument). The student's analysis probably ought ot take into consideration at least the following features in the essay under study: (1) Are there any hidden assumptions -- generalizations or value judgments taken for granted by the writer without discussion? If such assumptions are present, what happens to the argument if someone proves them false or disagrees with them? (2) What important generalizations are asserted? Are the generalizations supported by adequate evidence? Is the evidence relevant, reliable, and adequate to sustain the generalization? Does any evidence counter to the generalization come to mind? Does the writer distinguish fact from opinion, and seek to substantiate the value of statements of opinion? (3) If statements about causal relationship are made, are the statements plausible and well founded, or does a reader doubt whether the supposed causes are adequate to produce the results attributed to them? (4) Do the writer's conclusions follow from his premises? Does he draw conclusions that go beyond what his evidence will allow (by being either *too positive or too negative*)? (5) If the writer claims that his interpretation of data or his way of handling a problem is superior to what others have said, does he satisfy you that his view of his subject is ineed superior?

These are the fundamental questions one can put to an expository essay (if its purpose is to change the reader's mind on a subject or to lead the reader toward a particular conclusion on an issue). It is highly appropriate that the student learn to apply these questions both to professional essays and to his own. But before the student can write this assignment, he will need a thorough explanation, and some demonstrations, of the process of evaluating reasoning. This writing assignment should not be given without extensive preliminary discussion. And the discussion should be carried on, if at all possible, without the signs, symbols, diagrams, or other apparatus of logic that is hard to teach because it seems of doubtful relevance to what students are doing in our course.

(17)

to expand a sentence containing many predications (major and minor). This assignment is an exercise in developing a statement. It reminds the student that initial sentences and paragraphs constitute a commitment to the reader -- a commitment about subject, plan of approach, and even tone -- a contract the writer should honor, one that he can only at his peril fail to honor. This notion is a pleasant abstraction for many students; they do not know what it means. Nor do they know how the structure of sentences, including subordinate clauses and subordinating conjunctions, coordinating conjunctions, the placing of words, the use of adjectives or adverbs, etc., helps the sentence to say whatever it is trying to say. The student can, therefore, usefully practice the art of dissecting sentences from his reading to see what they are saying, how their writers develop them, and how they themselves might develop a similar sentence to realize its meaning fully.

The student can also profit from writing down for himself a sentence containing many "predications" -- a *compound or complex* sentence, one also containing important adjectives and adverbs that make or imply important statements -- and determining how he will explain that sentence to his reader. He can, that is, be asked to commit himself, then to develop an essay honoring that commitment. The procedures employed need not be complex, although the student might well practice writing sentences implying concession ("although....") and developing such sentences. Most do not know what "concession" implies. The tests of the resulting theme will be: how good and useful a sentence does the student select or write for himself? how fully does he develop the ideas in it?

This assignment can serve well as a final class essay. A sentence for expansion (perhaps also for proving) can be assigned from the reading or composed in class at the first of the two test sessions.

(18)*

to define and use an abstract term. Many, perhaps most, college students have trouble handling abstractions. They seem at home in describing and narrating (they have done much of that in high school), but when they come to thinking about abstract issues (symbolism, conformity, conscience, reason, etc.), they fall flat. One corrective is practice in definition -- the

extended definition of abstract terms. Assignments in extended definition can begin with analytic definitions (by genus and differentiae). In extended definition, however, the student should surely be encouraged to illustrate how the word is used by responsible writers and speakers. He should, that is, show how the word is used "operationally." To what sorts of situations would it apply? What kind (or kinds) of situations can we imagine in which the word would apply? He can, as part of his definition, name and describe such situations, and show how the term-to-be-defined would be used about them. He can slso, possibly, be asked to locate in his reading and explain a sentence using the word. He can be asked to distinguish the meaning of one abstraction from that of another with a similar meaning (how does a "conservative" differs from a "reactionary"?). He can even be asked to write a suitable and significant statement using the word under examination correctly. The purpose of the whole exercise, clearly, is to force the student to understand concretely an abstract word or phrase. Whatever the teacher can do to force the student to think concretely about these abstract words is to the good. For improvement in a student's style often depends on his using abstractions clearly, consistently and appropriately for his reader. Abstract terms are liable to exhibit vagueness and ambiguity; definition seeks to reduce both. (One additional method of forcing the students to think concretely is to encourage them to reify the abstractions they are defining; that is, encourage them to use the abstraction as subject of a verb designating action. A species of metaphor will result, and so, often, will greater vividness of style.)

One (possibly preferable) variant of the assignment is to give the student a statement containing a difficult abstraction and ask him to defend it. He would use extended definition to explain the abstraction, then employ the techniques used in assignment 9 and earlier to find evidence in support of the statement. (If the assigned statement contained multiple predications -- many assertions about its subject -- the new assignment might even review no. 17.)

(19)*

to support a proposition (one that does more than generalize about observable experience). This assignment is designed to teach "applied reasoning" -- i.e., the construction of sound written arguments (as destinguished from ways of managing the formulae in symbolic logic). The student might be given (or asked to find) a proposition that is in doubt. ("Freshmen can/cannot be helped to improve their writing by means of a formal course in composition" is one example of such a proposition -- though not one recommended for the assignment.

Another example: "The study of Latin in high school is/is not of value to the student preparing for college.") He can then be asked, in class discussion, to discover kinds of data and processes of reasoning that can be brought to bear to prove (or disprove) the proposition. He can then select the kinds of data and modes of argument that are most likely to prove his case, and plan his paper around them. He might well be encouraged to consider what a person who believes the opposite of what the student will argue might say in support of his (the opponent's) position. And the student might try to decide how he would answer opposing arguments.

What the student needs in order to carry forward this assignment is plenty of practice in discovering relevant data and patterns of reasoning. The discovery, however, should grow out of the demands imposed (the problems presented) by a specific task; it should not, for our purposes, result from applying "rules" for induction or deduction that have been taught previously, in the abstract. A good deal of class work on "inventing" arguments is therefore essential, as well as some rigorous testing of the various "invented" arguments to discover just how strong they are.

This assignment might be repeated if students have difficulty with it, or even if they don't. The ability to do this kind of job is fundamental to success in college and professional life, and the ability to do it well may help the student much in the second semester.

This assignment might serve well as a final class essay. But since it would not normally be accompanied by drill in invention, the assignment would have to have been tried at least once before during the semester, if students were to have any hope of success with it as a class exercise at the end of the course.

(20)*

to evaluate a statement or assumption from the reading. (Strongly recommended) This assignment forces the student to do many of the things that a college student should learn to do. He must ask himself whether he believes what he reads. The student needs to get over believing that what the printed page says must be true; he must get over reading passively just to get "the ideas" in a piece of exposition. He must also (vide assignment 9) practice testing as well as forming generalizations, and he must practice setting forth his opinions clearly, plausibly, and responsibly, to earn the respect of his reader.

All these steps this assignment invites the student to take. He should look at the essays he has read and find a sentence (or he can be assigned a sentence, or he can be given several to choose from) with which he must agree or disagree. He may be asked to find an assumption -- a statement taken for granted without discussion -- underlying some ideas in the reading. (The statement assigned should not be one that is directed toward the future -- either a statement of prediction or a statement recommending action. These matters will be dealt with in English 102.) His task is to take a position on the statement chosen: to determine whether the author had a firm basis for making the statement, and to use his reading and experience in an orderly manner to illustrate and confirm, to illustrate and qualify, or to refute it. As in earlier assignments during the term, he should be sure that his choice of illustrative or supporting matter is in point -- that it truly illustrates or supports his position. The instructor should insist on rigorous precision in the interpreting of the statement under study, on careful formulation of the student's own views, and on aptness as well as clarity in illustrative detail.

This assignment (like 18 and 19) may be given as a final class essay. Perhaps an opportunity to do the job once out of class and once in class would be useful, if time allows. Students can be told to choose a sentence, or told what sentence they will use, and be encouraged to gather material before the next-to-last class. Both classes at the end of the semester can then be used for outlining, writing, and revising.

Part B

V.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE TEACHING OF FRESHMAN ENGLISH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

By Donald deFano (Member of the Freshman English Committee)

It is generally agreed in the Department that a beginning college student should learn to recognize and utilize the concept of "rhetoric," that he should learn to distance himself sufficiently from the expository prose which he reads and writes to judge with some accuracy and detachment its effectiveness. There is, however, no agreement as to the best approach to the attainment of such learning, and for a very good reason: different people can best achieve it in different ways. The skills and predilections of teachers vary even as do the competencies and predispositions of their students.

Views expressed to the Freshman Composition Committee by instructors reveal a wide range of pedagogical assumptions. Some instructors are particularly offended by "disembodied" prose. They want their students to write seriously, from a position of intense personal conviction. Other instructors take a diametric position; the last thing they want to do is draw out their students. They prefer to cultivate what might be called an "academic" attitude.

And of course the students vary enormously. A small number bring to the university already formed a trust in the ultimate value of learning for its own sake. A larger number of students are simply intimidated by the new experience, and for many, the freshman composition program is merely something to be got through. All these students share some general characteristics. Whether humble, arrogant, or simply disinterested, they are not anxious to call attention to themselves. They attempt to produce a product which will find favor in the eyes of their instructors, with little concern as to its validity as a reflexion of themselves. A student will frequently ask his instructor if some paper he has written was what the instructor wanted, with the clear implication that for each assignment the instructor has some perfected Platonic model against which the student's work failed because it lacked a sentence here or a phrase there. The student will have difficulty understanding an explanation that the inadequacy of the paper was the inefficiency with which it carried out the student's intention. Students also tend to take criticism personally. A marginal comment that some syntactical unit is "meaningless" is more likely to elicit a defense of what was meant than an evaluation of the way in which that meaning was expressed.

A variety of approaches are utilized by instructors on the staff. Some instructors assume that though the students know "grammar," they do not know, by and large, what relationship exists between syntactical and grammatical forms and meaning. These instructors attempt to develop a sense of form in their students. They will analyze sentences in terms of basic predication and qualifying modification. They will analyze paragraphs in terms of the patterns formed by groups of sentences, and the relevance of those patterns to the total intention or effect of the work. One instructor utilizes precis extensively as a writing exercise. These approaches assume that the student has or will acquire something of significance which he wants or will want to communicate, and that what he needs is a refinement of his skills in handling the forms of his language.

By contrast, many instructors are convinced that the lack of substantive ideas is the basic inadequacy of their students. They approach the teaching of composition by looking for subject matter which will enjoin student reaction. They frequently employ well written, controversial essays, hoping even to offend their students and thereby goad them into at least an attempt to defend themselves. By using this approach, these instructors hope to destroy any preconception the student may have that college English is simply an extension of his high school work. These instructors would argue that once a student is motivated to express himself he will be motivated to find out how.

In any classroom there will be some students ready to express themselves who primarily need practice in and study of the structure of their language, and there will be students almost pathologically unable to make and be held responsible for assertions. There is no "best" approach for all these students, and the instructor is far better off to select an approach which suits his style, which allows him to utilize his particular capabilities to their fullest. He should not be unduly distressed if the design of his course varies somewhat from that of his fellow instructors.

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

FRESHMAN ENGLISH PROGRAM

PART C

SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1967-68

CONTENTS:

I. Suggestions About Making Theme Assignments
II. Some General Interpretive Questions That Students Might Ask About Essays
III. The Functioning of Sentences in Paragraphs
IV. Considerations in the Reading of Student Themes
V. Guides to the Writing of Comments on Student Themes
VI. Guidelines Used in the Assistance of New Staff

September, 1967

I.

SUMMARY OF SUGGESTIONS ABOUT MAKING THEME ASSIGNMENTS

1. Before making final (or even tentative) plans for any assignment, think carefully about the progress students have made in your course, and decide what can as well as what cannot be reasonably expected of them.

2. In thinking about a proposed assignment, try to determine what analytical or logical or rhetorical problems it will present to students.

3. Then ask yourself: is this assignment feasible? Do the students know enough or have access to enough information to be able to complete the assignment well? Do the students have enough perception to solve the problems the assignment will pose? Can I teach students what they need to know on this assignment that they do not already know?

4. Imagine for yourself what a good paper on the proposed assignment would look like. In drafting instructions, be sure that you ask specifically for the kinds of things that you think a good paper ought to have. Obviously this does not mean that you should tell the student what to write, but if you expect the student to define a term or terms, for example, the instructions ought to make clear that care in definition is expected.

5. Define carefully for yourself the scope of the subject students are to discuss, and make clear in your written instructions how far he is expected to go or may go in exploring the subject. (Is he, for example, expected to consult a minimum number of source materials, to use one or two specific books or essays, or to generate ideas out of his own head, etc.?)

   In your instructions, make clear, where appropriate, the range of choices and approaches to the subject that the student has available. Be as precise as you can about the subject he is to discuss.

6. Besides making explicitly clear what is expected of the student, take time in your instructions (or in your oral explanation of the assignment) to identify the major problems facing the student and, where possible, make suggestions about how the student might address these problems. This procedure may be unnecessary in end-of-term review assignments, but if a writing assignment is is to teach -- to leave the student with greater knowledge or power in a particular area than he had before he wrote it -- a student should know what he is expected to practice and learn from writing it.

7. In writing instructions, choose "directive" verbs with great care. Prefer relatively precise verbs like "compare," or "explain how," or "argue" to less precise verbs like "discuss" or "deal with."

8. Where possible and useful, specify an audience for the students to address in their writing, and a purpose or occasion (or both) for writing. Encourage students to have an audience in mind, and help them to be sure to keep in mind why they are addressing that audience.

PART C I.

9. Before issuing the instructions, double check them for ambiguous language, and eliminate it as nearly as possible. Look particularly at verbs used, and at statements of what characteristics a good paper should have, to be sure they are unambiguous.

   Try to be sure that no student can legitimately ask "What does he [i.e., you] want?" while he prepares his paper.

10. You may find it helpful to tell students specifically on what features of their work your comments will focus.

Part C

II

SOME GENERAL INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS THAT STUDENTS MIGHT ASK ABOUT ESSAYS BY PROFESSIONAL WRITERS AND OTHER STUDENTS

1. Who is speaking? How do you know? (Never mind the name of the author listed on the title page. Identify the speaker from evidence within the essay.) What sort of person does he "sound like"? What features of his language give you these impressions of him? To what extent does his language enable you to describe his personality or character?

   (In these questions, as in the next four, you are treating the essay as if it were spoken discourse. There are differences, to be sure, between pieces composed for oral delivery and those designed to be read in silence. But the similarities between discourse intended for oral delivery and that intended for silent reading are many and important.)

2. What is the occasion for the essay? What prompts the speaker to "speak out"?

3. Who is being addressed? How do you know?

4. What "tone" is established? How is it established? (Take "tone" to include the inflections, intonations, accents, rhythms, etc., that you would hear if the piece were indeed spoken aloud. Tone, thus defined, is a feature of any discourse, and gives a clue to the speaker's attitude toward his subject and his audience. The "tone" may also signal what the speaker feels is his social relationship to his audience, and may imply some of the author's feelings about himself.)

5. What is the speaker saying (asserting, recommending, advocating)? How do you know?

6. What is the speaker expressing? What doubts, fears, suspicions, confidence, anger, etc., if any, are communicated by the piece? How do you know?

7. What is the author's purpose? How do you know? (The purpose and "what is being said" or "what is being expressed" may not necessarily be the same.)

8. What kinds of data, what materials, are included in the essay? Do these materials seem appropriate to the purpose, and relevant to what the essay is saying?

9. What processes of reasoning are employed in the essay? Are they employed soundly? If evidence is required for the establishment of the author's opinions, does he provide good evidence? Are any generalizations or value judgments taken for granted as the reasoning proceeds? If so, are these generalizations and judgments reasonable, or are they so doubtful that major parts of the reasoning are called into question?

10. Judging by his language and his tone and the kinds of evidence and reasoning he uses, are you inclined to believe the speaker? Does he impress you as a trustworthy person, or as unreliable (because uninformed, biased, overly emotional, or for another reason)? Why?

11. How is the material of the piece arranged? What does the introduction accomplish? What does each paragraph accomplish? (We can also ask, what

does each sentence in each paragraph accomplish for that paragraph?) What overall pattern, what principle of order, is followed in the piece? Is this principle of order related to the processes of reasoning identified in #9.

12. Are the sections of the essay connected together? If so, how? Is the connection in each case clear and effective? If so, which connections fail, and why?

13. Are there any distinctive kinds of sentence patterns or habits of expression that can be called characteristic of the author's writing? Any kinds of diction? Any special kinds of figurative language? Note enough examples of each to justify saying that they are "characteristic" of the writing.

14. In the introduction to any essay, the speaker makes an implicit commitment to his reader that he will discuss a particular subject from a particular point of view? Has the speaker fulfilled his commitment? What parts, if any, has he failed to fulfill? Is there any explanation for his having ignored these parts of his commitment?

15. In the introduction, does the author assert (or imply) that his views on a particular subject are better than those of another writer, or that his way of handling a problem is superior to that of another man? If so, does the writer substantiate during his essay his claim that his views or his proposals are superior to those of the other writer(s)? Why or why not?

16. Does the author accomplish his purpose neatly and gracefully for his intended audience? What particular features of the essay lead you to think so?

17. Was the author's purpose worth seeking? (Was the essay worth writing?) Of each sentence and each paragraph, too, we can ask the same question: does it accomplish its purpose neatly and efficiently? Was the purpose worth accomplishing?

Part C

III

THE FUNCTIONING OF SENTENCES IN PARAGRAPHS (AND OF PARAGRAPHS IN ESSAYS)

Any sentence in any paragraph (like a paragraph is a larger unit of discourse) may be regarded as having two purposes: to say something and to do something. What a sentence "says" is what is communicated to the reader by the paraphrasable content of the sentence; what a sentence "does" is to play a role in the structure of ideas in the paragraph. Every sentence acts: it participates in the development of a sequence of ideas.

Here are some of the things that a sentence can do:

STATE -- make a major assertion about the subject of the paragraph (possibly giving the thesis of the paragraph)

RESTATE -- put into different words, for purposes of clarification or adjustment of emphasis, an assertion already made

EXEMPLIFY -- give an illustration of what is meant by a previous statement, or a concrete instance that will help to make the statement credible or vivid

DEFINE -- state the meaning of a word or words used in a sentence that precedes or follows

PARTICULARIZE -- enumerate the specific facts or details implied or summarized in a previous (or subsequent) statement

DESCRIBE -- give one or more detials of an object, to help the reader imagine the object precisely or understand it fully

NARRATE -- name an event (or a chronological series of events) simply to assert that it occurred or to help particularize a previous statement

EXPAND -- state at greater length, or more comprehensively (to clarify or embrace more instances) an idea already expressed

QUALIFY -- restrict the meaning of an assertion already made

CONCEDE -- acknowledge the presence of a fact or opinion that might militate against the acceptability of a previous sentence

EVALUATE -- make some judgment about an event or condition named in a previous sentence (or sentences)

CONTRADICT -- assert the falsity or anaccuracy of a previous statement

PROVE -- offer reasoning or evidence to help establish the truth of an assertion

DISPROVE -- introduce reasoning or evidence to demonstrate the falsity of a previous statement

Part C

III

PROPOSE -- present an idea for consideration, without necessarily asserting its truth

COUNTER -- offer an idea or proposal to replace or offset an idea previously introduced

IDENTIFY A CAUSE OR RESULT -- point out what produced the event referred to in a previous sentence or what effects that event produced

HYPOTHESIZE -- suggest a possible explanation for an event or condition

COMPARE OR CONTRAST -- introduce objects or events to be examined alongside each other, for the purpose of clarifying or emphasizing features of them or evaluating them

INTRODUCE AN ANALOGY -- refer to an object, event, or process similar to one's subject, to clarify or explain a judgment about the subject

IDENTIFY AN ASSUMPTION -- point out an idea or statement that has been taken for granted in making a previous assertion

ASK A QUESTION -- reveal a need for further information or analysis (sometimes as a transition to the next step in a line of reasoning)

SUMMARIZE -- bring together the principal ideas already introduced in the paragraph

CONCLUDE -- show that the facts and opinions previously cited lead to new knowledge or judgments

You will doubtless be able to describe other actions a sentence may perform.

Some questions that you may find helpful to apply to each paragraph and each sentence in essays a student writes or reads are:

(A) Is the role of each sentence in the context of surrounding sentences evident to the reader?

(B) Do the words that connect the sentence to surrounding sentences accurately characterize that role?

(C) Is the role useful? That is, would the paragraph do its work as effectively without the sentence as it does with the sentence?

Part C

IV

CONSIDERATIONS IN THE READING OF STUDENTS' THEMES

Each teacher will probably find it wise to decide on which of the features of a composition he wishes to place emphasis in any assignment.

The following list may help him to decide on his emphases. The list is long; only a few of the items can usefully be stressed on any one assignment. And no teacher should try as a matter of policy to discuss all or even a large number of these matters in commenting on any one theme. He may, of course, wish to comment on all flagrant weaknesses in areas emphasized on the assignment. On most assignments, the teacher ought to inform the students what features are to be especially emphasized in setting grades and writing comments.

SUBJECT MATTER

Interest and significance (is the subject worth reading about?)
Aptness for prospective audience
Aptness to assigned purpose (or purpose assumed by the writer)
Limitation of subject (in reference to length of essay assigned)
Relevance of subject to assignment (if the subject was not specified)
Relevance of details of data to subject of theme
Adequacy of matter "invented" to the purpose of the essay

REASONING

Accuracy of reporting of data (If the theme is based on an essay or work of literature, is the substance of the essay accurately described? the literary work interpreted reasonably? If the theme is based on experience or observation, is the experience or observation accurately described?)
Generalizations: reasonable? soundly derived from data?
Assumptions: recognized (if significant)? reasonable?
Cause-and-effect inferences: fair in light of data?
Distinctions between facts, opinions, statements of evaluation, statements of preference -- regularly and wisely made?
Deductive or inductive procedures: soundly used?
Adequacy of data used to support general conclusions drawn by writer
Statements of prediction -- reasonable in light of data cited?

THE RHETORIC OF THE WHOLE THEME

Appropriateness of division of subject into parts
Clarity and aptness (for subject? for audience?) of the plan of organization
Coherence of Parts
Suitability of expository procedures used (suitability to purpose and subject? to audience being addressed?)

- definitions (are they provided where needed?)
- illustrations
- explanations of processes or sequences of events
- comparisons and contrasts
- anecdotes
- etc.

Introduction (adequately comprehensive? not over-inclusive?)
Body of the paper: does it carry out what the introduction promised (or

IV

explain why it departs from the plan originally announced)?
Lucidity and gracefulness of movement from section to section
Conclusion (apt in view of the matters discussed in the paper? informative? significant, i.e. more than a repetition of points clearly made before?)

PARAGRAPHS

Adequacy of introductory sentence(s) as expressions of the writer's "commitment"
Clarity and Aptness of way of arranging material within each paragraph (Is the desired emphasis established?)
Unity (Does each paragraph advance a single major proposition? If not, can the absence of strict unity be defended?)
Coherence (preservation of consistent point of view, use of apt transitional words, etc.)
Individual sentences: clarity of purpose? suitability to their role in paragraph?
Conclusion: relevant to body of paragraph? useful (not superfluous)?
Are related sentences in the whole essay kept together by the paragraph punctuation?

VOICE AND TONE

Freshness and distinctiveness
Suitability to subject, audience, writer's responsibility, writer's assumed "role"
Reasonable consistency (are changes in tone accidental or purposeful and effective?)

SENTENCES

Effectiveness and clarity of predication (i.e. the clarity with which major assertions contained in the sentence are communicated)
Clarity of structure (i.e. freedom from ambiguity in arrangement of parts — clauses and phrases)
Aptness of syntactic structures to ideas being communicated and emphasis intended
"Reasonableness" of length (in respect to intended audience? in respect to the student's power of controlling sentence?)
Adequate variety in length and structure
Economy of structure (are the structures used the ones that will make the point most concisely?)

DICTION

Precision
Are denotations and connotations of words clearly understood by the writer?
Vividness
Freshness (including avoidance of jargon and cliches)
Respect for standard usage and idiom (if required by purposes of theme and "imagined circumstances" of its composition)
Economy
Aptness of figurative language (if used)
Balance of abstractness/concreteness, generality/particularity, non-sensory/sensory, as appropriate for subject

Part C

IV

FUNDAMENTAL LITERACY

Observance of standard conventions of

- grammar
- mechanics (including punctuation)
- spelling

Part C

V

GUIDES TO THE WRITING OF COMMENTS ON STUDENT THEMES

Marginal Comments

In making marginal comments, remember that you are neither a proofreader (responsible for normalizing spelling, punctuation, and typographical style) nor an editor (responsible for improving diction, editor (responsible for improving diction, idiom, and possibly syntax) nor a judge (responsible for rendering a verdict of "good" or "bad"), but a teacher, from whom the student hopes to get help in improving his reasoning, his organization, his style, and so on. If the student is to learn from what you write in the margins of his paper, your observations must be clear and self-explanatory.

1. Use marginal comments primarily to call the student's attention to some particular strength or weakness in his work--usually a strength or weakness of detail, or at any rate one that can be located precisely--at the point where it occurs. Usually comments that refer to the reasoning or design or style in the whole theme can best be reserved for the general (final) comment.

2. Use correction symbols only where the error will be obvious to the student once it is pointed out. Correction symbols can point out spelling errors, run-on sentences, misuses of the semicolon, etc. But they should not as a rule be used where the reader is exercising judgment in determining that the writing or reasoning is weak. Avoid letting "Log" stand for an unexplained and unidentified error in Logic; don't just write "cl" if you think the passage is unclear or "ambig" if the passage seems ambiguous. Instead assume that the student would not have made the error in logic or permitted the lack of clarity or tolerated the ambiguity if he had known it was present. Explain, in a phrase or two, precisely where the difficulty lies and why the passage is open to criticism. Reread your comment and ask yourself: would this comment make the source of difficulty clear to me, if I had made the mistake (without realizing that it was a mistake) in the first place?

3. Try not to limit marginal comments to matters of mechanics, unless, of course, the mechanical difficulties are so striking and frequent that comment on other features of the essay is superfluous.

4. Refer the student to a helpful section of the handbook if you can, but don't let a reference to the handbook suffice where explanation of a difficulty (e.g., in subordination or placement of a modifier) is needed before the student will understand his error. Occasionally, if time allows, rewrite what the student has done to show how it can be improved. Also, indicate briefly why your version is better than his.

5. Avoid using "?" and terse queries like "what? or "how come?" or "so what." If you feel that the student's reasoning is unsatisfactory (e.g., because an unsound conclusion has been drawn or the significance of an idea is not made clear), explain your judgment precisely enough to let the student know where his thinking is faulty. Don't leave the student guessing that your notation simply reveals an honest difference of opinion between the two of you, or that your opinions on the point as issue are unjustifiably rigid. Better fewer marginal comments well explained than a large number of cryptic, uninformative jottings.

6. In general, avoid arguing with the student. Focus on passages in which the student might demonstrably have improved what he has done. If the matter on

which you are tempted to comment is simply a source of disagreement between you, omit the comment. Also, avoid asking a student to "explain" a point on which his reasoning is fairly obvious or self-evident. Ask for explanation only when the reasoning is genuinely hidden and needs to be disclosed. Try not to quibble over matters of diction and sentence structure that only reflect differences between your taste and that of the student. Comment on style only when you can propose a visible improvement in the student's way of expressing an idea.

7. Don't hesitate to note places where the student's thinking is especially effective, his style especially telling, his organization notably well handled, etc.

General (Final) Comments

The purpose of the general comment is to record your overall impression of the paper and, more important, to point out goals for the writer to seek in revising that paper or in writing his next paper. The comment ought not to be merely the statement of a judgment about the paper at hand, although, of course, some comments that analyze a paper in detail can imply constructive suggestions for revision or for the elimination of recurrent weaknesses in the student's writing. The list that follows sums up the characteristics a good general comment ought to have; it is not a list of items to be included in every general comment you write.

1. Unless the mechanics and syntax are hopelessly inept (sometimes, to be sure, they are), make the general comment more than a list or summary of errors in mechanics and syntax.

2. Point out the strengths or good features of the theme if you can, rather than focusing exclusively on weaknesses. This suggestion does not imply, however, that you should ransack a bad paper for a trifling virtue on which to comment. If the paper marks an improvement over the student's earlier work, tell him so and tell him why you think so.

3. In part, at least, let your general comment inform the student how well he has met the substantive, structural, and stylistic problems posed by the assignment. Deal with this point even if you plan to devote most of the comment to matters not related to the student's handling of the specific assignment.

4. Concentrate on the most important difficulties of substance, structure, and style that affect the paper as a whole. If the reason for criticism of some features of the paper is not obvious, suggest why these features are indeed weaknesses and, where possible, propose changes that would have improved the paper. Be sure that the student can see why you think he should have done differently than he did; make clear how the proposed changes improve the paper. Such comments are especially important if the student will be asked to revise his paper. Specify in the comment what the student's principal aims should be in revising.

5. Try to see that the comment is constructive--that it has "transfer value." That is, try to help the student to improve his work on future papers. To achieve this purpose, search out fundamental features that weaken the student's work: lack of coherence between paragraphs, reliance on unrecognized and undefended assumptions, excessive abstractness of diction, acceptance of unsound generalizations or of conclusions based on inadequate evidence, etc. Describe and illustrate these features so that the student will understand them and can learn to recognize them as he corrects rough drafts of future papers. Call particular attention, if

possible, to difficulties that recur in successive themes by the same student.

6. Let your general comment support, and be supported by, the marginal comments; the two sets of observations (marginal and general) should work together. Often you will be able to illustrate criticisms of the paper by referring to difficulties pointed out in detail in marginalia. But the general comment should not be merely a disjointed summary or repetition of the marginal comments. It must being your separate responses to the paper into focus; it must give the student a coherent evaluation of the paper as a whole.

7. See that your comment is thoughtfully, precisely, and tightly written. It may act as a model of writing for the student (it is, after all, a sample of your writing); even if it isn't a model of excellence, it ought not to be an illustration of what you have been trying to make your students avoid.

8. Unless you have developed a special relationship with the student in which irony will not be misinterpreted, take care that your comments are not ironic, sarcastic, condescending, or inclined to belittle the student as a person. Irony can only anger the student; it does not instruct him. Slangy, flippant admonitions (e.g., "Don't slit your wrists over this grade") should be avoided; supposedly a teacher can give more tasteful and beneficial advice.

9. Focus your comment on the paper, not on the personality or motivation of its author. Even making assumptions about what led the writer to adopt a particular attitude or subject is usually unwise. Of course, if parts of a paper are ambiguous or if the emphasis is fuzzy, you can and should ask the writer which of two or three possible meanings he intended to convey, or whether you are correct in believing that he meant to emphasize a particular point.

A Suggested Procedure for Handling

1. Read the theme quickly,making few or no marks on it.

2. Decide what features of the theme (good and bad) you wish to emphasize in your comment. Also decide how you can best present your reactions (especially the criticisms and suggested improvements)--i.e., how you can "get into" what you have to say about the paper. (If the problems in the paper are in reasoning or structure, you may need to read the paper two or three times, in order to grasp it as a whole, before deciding how you will construct your comment.)

3. Reread, writing marginal comments as needed, and focusing on those matters you have decided to emphasize.

4. Write the general comment, summing up your reactions, and citing if possible the specific parts of the paper where difficulties (or strengths) are most clearly evident.

5. Make a note to yourself (in a sort of "journal," for example) about the prominent features of the paper and about what you said, so that you can see in the revision or the next essay whether the student has made any progress in correcting weaknesses you have identified. Then use your notes on the student's past work to guide comments on how the student is improving and how he is not.

Part C

VI

GUIDELINES USED IN THE ASSISTANCE OF NEW STAFF

The committee of observers and advisers for new freshman staff uses principally these questions to guide its work:

I. Theme Assignments

Are they apt in relation to the purposes and progress of the course?

Are they suitable (in subject matter and tasks to be performed) to the ability, preparation, and needs of the students?

Where such explanation is appropriate, has the instructor satisfactorily explained (orally or in writing) the purposes of the assignment and the procedures the student is to follow?

Has he suggested to the students the possible difficulties of the assignment (if this procedure seems appropriate)?

Can the student fairly be expected to do what is asked of him? (If this is doubtful, does the instructor appear to be trying to "extend" the students for a specific purpose? Does the instructor have good reasons for making these demands of students at this time?)

II. Comments on Themes

Are they clear and specific in pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of the paper?

Where possible, does the instructor try to encourage the student to continue what he is doing well, at the same time that he tries to eliminate weaknesses?

Do they make it plain why the features receiving negative criticism are in fact weaknesses?

Are the comments concerned at least in part with the substance and structure of the paper?

Are mechanical matters given undue emphasis (or do they receive emphasis appropriate to the needs of the paper)?

Are the comments constructive? Will they help the students to perform better on his next assignment?

Is the tone suitable to the instructor's relationship with the student? If irony is used, is it defensible?

III. Conduct of Classes

Does he speak clearly and audibly?

Are his questions, explanations, and comments likely to be understandable to most of his students?

Part C

VI

Does he satisfactorily emphasize his major points so that students can be expected to retain them, whatever the subject of discussion (whether it be use of concessive clauses, the interpretation of an essay, ways of establishing tone, etc.)?

Does he appear to have some plan for the management of each of the classes and for achieving continuity from class to class?

(The observers should recognize that the progress of discussion and questions may force the teacher to abandon his initial plan.)

Does he hold the interest of his students and seem to get some attentive response from them?

Has he any undesirable mannerisms that detract from his ability to communicate (e.g., delivering important ideas while speaking out of the window, burying his face in a book while speaking, etc.)?

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

COURSE OUTLINE
AND
SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS
FOR
ENGLISH 102
PART A
(FIRST 3-5 WEEKS)

SPRING SEMESTER, 1968

R. L. Larson
7 February 1968

English 102

I. TEXTS

For all Students:

A collection of essays, either Van Ghent and Maas, The Essential Prose, or another collection chosen by the instructor, or both.

At the option of the Instructor:

Bilsky, Patterns of Argument (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston)

Gorrell and Laird, Modern English Handbook, 1967 edition (Prentice-Hall)

A collection of pieces of imaginative literature that center around a common theme.

II. GENERAL OBJECTIVES

In English 101, presumably, the student has acquired some skill in organizing a short expository piece; gathering and reasoning about data that may be relevant to his essay; deciding upon the purpose of an expository essay and arranging materials to serve the purpose; considering his audience and the occasion of his writing when he plans his essay; introducing clearly and developing faithfully an expository paragraph; establishing by his language a voice, an "identity," and an attitude toward his subject; using a variety of organizational plans; and constructing clear, vigorous English sentences.

English 102 seeks to give the student further practice in doing the things he has learned in 101. It also seeks to develop his ability to recognize the differences among prose styles, and his ability to make stylistic choices in his own essays in the light of his purpose and his intended audience. Specifically, it has these objectives:

(a) to review the fundamentals of effective reasoning as taught in 101, and to assure that students have mastered important techniques of reasoning and of analyzing the reasoning of others;

(b) to give each student the opportunity to write an essay arguing in support of a course of action to be taken in a future time (arguing, that is, what some texts call a "proposition of policy");

(c) to help students understand the special characteristics of the language of different writers, to help them see what constitutes "style" in prose, and some of the factors that differentiate one writer's "style" from another's;

(d) to give students further practice in adjusting style in accordance with the occasion and purpose of writing.

III. MULTI-SOURCE PAPERS

A final objective of 102 is to give the student practice in writing one or more "multi-source" papers. This is a paper in which the student must bring to bear on an issue or other subject of inquiry the views of several writers -- possibly writers using different genres -- for purposes of explanation or summary, comparison, evaluation, and so on. The assignment differs from the "library research paper" in that it does not require the use of the library (although an instructor may encourage students to find some of his sources in the library if they wish), and in that it is quite specifically focused (instead of being asked to write a "research paper" by picking an area of interest and narrowing it, the student should be given a particular problem or question to deal with).

The "multi-source paper" is recommended for 102 because the student needs practice in drawing upon, and bringing together, the views of different writers as he explores a field of inquiry. But it is not a necessary objective of 102 to train students in the use of the library. The library should be viewed in 102 as a resource on which the student can draw, not as an instrument he must unfailingly be trained to use. The focus is all assignments should be on the kinds of analysis, thinking, and writing the student must do, and not on his ability to locate books and articles. Locating material outside the text may be necessary (even though this year the text is full of meaty essays on substantial subjects), but it is a means to the larger end of good writing, and our focus must be upon the end rather than upon physical sources of information. (This is, of course, a matter of emphasis. Instructors should encourage students to use the library and help the students who want help; but the major goal of the student should be to solve a writing problem.)

The steps to be practiced by students in a multi-source paper (all of them are relevant to the work of a "researcher") include these:

(a) the student must recognize that he cannot handle the writing problem by drawing on only one or two sources and summarizing or comparing them;

(b) he must seek out at least three essays or books or reports that bear upon his subject;

(c) he must select from the chosen sources material that is likely to be of use; then he must record accurately and evaluate with discrimination what he finds in the sources;

(d) using the material he has gathered, he must organize an essay according to a plan that is logically sound, internally consistent, and apt in view of his purpose and audience;

(e) he must see that the material he has gathered (including necessary summary or paraphrase of books and articles consulted) is integrated smoothly into his whole essay, that it becomes a part of the essay rather than seeming to be a gratuitous addition (this involves learning to fit quotations, statistics, etc. neatly into a piece of discourse). The purpose, summarily, is to have students practice the finding, selection, interpretation, disposition, and integration of material. Sources may include essays in the reader, articles from newspapers or magazines and collections of documents bearing on one subject.

Just as the mechanics of using the library are peripheral matters, so are techniques of footnoting and compiling a bibliography. The writer's ethics demand full acknowledgement of all borrowings, and we can make clear to the student that there are conventions for making these acknowledgements. The form of footnotes and bibliography can be taught as a convenient way of discharging one's responsibilities and of helping the reader to pursue the subject in detail if he wishes; neither footnotes nor bibliography should be treated as ends in themselves, and they should not seem to rival in importance the substance or organization or the style in the paper.

Assignments for a multi-source paper can be connected to problems in reasoning or to topics in language, or can be related to other subjects of the instructor's own choosing.

It is probably wise for instructors to assign the multi-source paper not later than the middle of the semester and to require that it be submitted at least three or four weeks before the end of the course, so that instructors will have time to read the paper carefully, make appropriate comments, discuss the paper with student (if either party wishes), and to require suitable revisions. If the paper is not due until the very end of the course, the instructor often does not have time to read it carefully and help the student with needed revisions.

IV. WRITING REQUIREMENTS

In all sections students should write some 8-9 essays during the semester. One of these should be the multi-source paper, and 2 or 3 should be written in class. A final class essay (as in 101) may be assigned, but is optional. If used, it may be written in just one period or extended to two.

Total writing done by students during the term should be about 7,500 words.

V. REVIEW OF MAJOR TOPICS IN REASONING (3-5 WEEKS, EXACT TIME TO BE DECIDED BY THE INSTRUCTOR IN LIGHT OF THE PREPARATION AND NEEDS OF MEMBERS OF THE CLASS)

Listed below are topics that probably were discussed in most classes in English 101 during the fall semester. These are the topics and procedures that should be reviewed as necessary in the early weeks of 102.

kinds and sources of evidence, and their value;

the distinctions among facts, opinions, preferences, evaluations (where the grounds of judgment can be specified), and assumptions (see Appendix A for a listing of different kinds of statements which are subject to different methods of evaulation);

ways of interpreting, i.e., making judgments about, learning from, drawing inferences from, different kinds of data,

ways of recognizing, testing, and assessing the importance of assumptions;

inductive procedures: ways of generalizing, the notion of "probable" statements, the connection between "generalizing" and "predicting",

deductive procedures, including: categorical syllogisms (those that work by placing objects in classes), hypothetical ("if ... then") statements, alternative ("either ... or") statements.

VI. ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE FIRST 3-5 WEEKS

A. Required in all sections: An assignment -- possibly a multi-source paper --

in which the student must choose a problem that interests him (one requiring someone to take specific future action), examine and identify its causes, and propose a solution. Proposing a solution will require "predicting" the probable results of action, i.e., determining with the aid of data already in hand what results will follow if a proposed action or actions are taken, and showing why the action proposed by the student will have more desirable results than other possible actions. (Students can identify "problems" from direct observations, from the world they read about, from issues they study in, say, political science.) This assignment should come after the review of topics in reasoning.

B. Suggested Assignments in review of topics in reasoning. The following assignments are suggestions only. Staff members are free to develop other assignments consistent with the goals of this part of the course. But each staff member may find some here that are suitable to his way of organizing this section. Subjects for argument and essays for interpretation are amply supplied by the anthology.

As in 101, each staff member should place a copy of his assignments (throughout the course) in the folder with his name on it in the second drawer of the file cabinet in the M-Z mailroom. It will be helpful, too, if each person will also make notes on the sheet about the relative effectiveness and success of the assignment.

1. Ask students to define for themselves an issue in the interpretation or evaluation of some essay, editorial, article, event, or condition (on or off campus) and to discuss with students the kinds of evidence and reasoning that would be needed to argue in favor of that interpretation. After a day or so of discussing ways of finding suitable data and ways of winning the reader's acceptance of their views, students could write an essay presenting their evaluation or interpretation. Other kinds of assignments, however, might reinforce (or test) equally well the lessons on reasoning taught in 101, and help prepare the students for the long paper arguing in support of a course of action.

2. An exercise in which the student interprets, or shows the significance of, some completed event or fixed condition. The purpose here is possibly to make a value judgment, possibly to show the "significance" of something: what does it mean? what does it reveal? what does it seem to anticipate? what did it produce? This should be a full-length theme (750 words or more), and it may use many sources, including newspapers and magazines. Its purpose is to get the student to find facts and then make these facts acquire meaning -- significance. The student can draw on his history course or his political science course if he wishes; he should, however, guard against taking too important or complex a historical subject.

   One variant (not really a substitute for the main assignment, but possibly a warm-up for it): give the student a picture of an object or scene, and ask for a comment on what judgments can be made, what inferences drawn, from what he sees. This exercise helps the student, in Sherlock Holmes' phrase, to observe as well as see.

3. (Recommended as useful practice for most students -- and hard for most.) An exercise in the identification and testing of assumptions. The student is invited to choose an editorial, magazine article, chapter from a book, etc. and to identify the assumptions (the premises and judgments taken for granted) in the piece under study. He can also indicate whether he

thinks the assumptions are sound or unsound -- and how he reaches that judgment -- and how seriously any unsound assumptions weaken the conclusions reached by the author. Students sometimes enjoy this procedure, and find it instructive. (The student should be asked to hand in with his essay a copy of the material he is discussing.)

4. Very much like (3), and exercise in the judging of reasoning in which induction (generalization, or statements or probability) and/or deduction are used in the reaching of conclusions. Give the student a passage (one obvious example -- Mark Antony's funeral oration), or let him find one for himself, in which these procedures are employed, and let him analyze it. See exercise material in Beardsley's first two chapters.

5. An exercise in constructing a syllogism and then building an argumentative essay strictly on the syllogism -- with an introduction of subject, a paragraph or two giving major premises and establishing controlling assumptions, a paragraph or two giving facts that constitute a minor premise, and a conclusion.

6. Exercise in the analysis of an essay in which the author begins by identifying a problem, substantiates the reality of the problem, looks for its causes (advancing hypotheses and rejecting them until he gets the one he wants), then proposes a solution -- something a man or men can do in future.

7. A variant of the required assignment is a paper in which the student must explain a puzzling phenomenon, or choose how to interpret, say, a literary work or character. (Cf. the issue of whether Macbeth is hero or villain, or problems of accounting for Hamlet's hesitations.) The task is to find an explanation, or to choose an explanation, that satisfactorily accounts for what happened and that is consistent with other available evidence. The "problem" arises because the choice of explanation or interpretation is not easy, there being many contending ways of viewing the character, event, passage of text, and so on.

8. Exercise in the analysis of an issue. The student's attention can be called to an issue -- a question on which opposed positions can quite reasonably be taken and defended -- either through readings in the anthologies, through newspaper and magazine articles, or through the events he sees and discussions he hears in the world of spring, 1968. He can be asked to name the issue, identify the opposed positions, cite some of the evidence and reasoning that might be used to support each position, and suggest a way of resolving the issue. Issues worth discussing might include (among many, many others): whether students have a right to strike against a university; whether censorship of books and films and plays is ever defensible; whether scientists should be compelled to turn over to the government discoveries that might bear a national defense; etc.

9. (A particularization of 8.) Invite the students to define the position they think teachers of English ought to take on issues of English usage today, and address an argumentative piece to their teachers (high school, college) or school administrators in support of their position. Remind students that the argument will have to be carefully built, because the audience may well be aware of the arguments both ways.

(Part B of the program discusses topics for emphasis and suggested assignments for remainder of the course.)

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

FRESHMAN ENGLISH PROGRAM

ENGLISH 102

OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

SPRING SEMESTER, 1968

PART B

February, 1968

R. L. Larson

29 February 1968

I. DICTION, STYLE, "VOICE," AND TONE (3-4 weeks)

In this part of the course, students should be introduced or reintroduced to the study of a writer's language or style (including diction, sentence structure, word choice, and given some opportunity to experiment with using different styles for different purposes. This section ends the course where 101 began--on language as an instrument of communication and an artistic medium, too.

Specific topics to introduce (if they have not already been touched on in passing):

A. The workings of words in context (how context qualifies and explains meanings) and the processes by which the meanings and resonance (connotations) of words change over time.

B. The factors -- relating to word choice, sentence construction, point of view, words and locutions habitually used, etc. -- that help us to sense a writer's "style" and establish his "tone of voice".

C. Style and tone as the result of choices about words, metaphors and similes, "levels" of diction, sentence structure, rhythm, etc. -- choices made in relation to occasion, purpose, audience.

D. Style and tone as revealing attitudes, assumptions, social relationships; the attitudes of speaker toward subject, listener, himself; assumptions about the speaker's world and his audience; the relationships between speaker and hearers, and between speaker and the world in which he lives.

II. ASSIGNMENTS DEALING WITH STYLE AND TONE

These assignments are all suggestions; none is required. More are listed than anyone can use, and everyone on the staff is encouraged to devise their assignments on style -- suitable to the purposes of this section -- to add to or substitute for some of these.

A. An analysis of dominant features of language in an essay, poem, or story, and the importance of these features for a reader's understanding of the work. Are the words the author uses largely "denotative" or "connotative" (to use the commonplace distinction)? what sorts of resonance (associations, suggestions) do his words have in their hearers' minds? Does his language refer to any special sort of activity or occupation. Is it largely metaphoric or literal? abstract or concrete? general or particular? non-sensory or sensory? From what languages are his words derived? Has he any favorite words, idioms, or locutions? Does he use a good deal of modification, or let nouns or verbs speak for themselves?

B. Parody -- give the student an essay with a distinctive style, and invite him to parody it. Be careful to explain that successful parody requires that the new style be similar to that of the original, but slightly distorted, and/or applied to a less significant (comic) subject. Parody is difficult, but instructive; it requires (and demonstrates) a delicate but sure grasp of the subject's style plus the tact to deflect the style just enough to be funny without being absurd. But parody can free the students from the restrictions of normal exposition; it can be fun.

C. Find a poem or prose passage that would be of some interest, and let students interpret it, referring to contemporary meanings of words for full clarification of the piece.

D. A study of an essay to show how language and substance cooperate to characterize the speaker, reveal his attitudes, establish his credentials, identify his assumptions. This is a "literary" treatment of exposition: an analysis of dramatic characterization through speech.

See also the assignment from Dorothy Vella attached as Appendix A.

E. An essay on the distinctive features of style in one or more pieces read, without regard, necessarily, to the speaker's self-characterization. Class discussion of one writer might precede an assignment on another. The pattern might include both enumerative analysis of features of style and evaluation (within the student's paper).

F. One staff member suggests an assignment requiring comparison of tone and style in a full-length article with the tone and style of a Reader's Digest condensation of the article. Students might also note the differences in effect produced by the two pieces, and relate these differences to audiences reached. Is there any change in meaning or emphasis in the condensation? How is it achieved? What changes in proportion are found from the original to its condensation?

G. A comparison of the effects of expository and poetic or fictional treatment of the same theme. What is the difference in "style" one detects between the two forms, and how or why is the difference (or differences) important? Those who know the pieces can imagine an essay on the theme of disobedience in Thoreau's "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience" and Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener," and the treatment of an alien intruder in Baldwin's "Notes of a Native Son" might easily be compared with fictional or poetic versions of the same idea.

H. Study the differences in style between essays on a similar set of subjects written for different audiences. James Agee, for example, reviewed Henry V for The Nation and for Time. (The director of English 102 has copies of both reviews.) What can you infer about the audiences in the two cases from the style and content of the reviews. This, or an assignment like it, might reveal important features of "style."

I. Invite students to choose for themselves (or let the instructors choose for them) a word or words that may be of interest. Then invite students to look up the word in several dictionaries and discuss the derivations and changes of meaning associated with the word, and the uses to which different authors put it. (This will be a difficult assignment for everyone to attempt simultaneously; staff members might reach agreement as to who will use it when, if anyone wants it.)

J. As an exercise in recognizing the importance of stylistic choices, the student might be asked -- perhaps as a final assignment -- to present the same argument to two different audiences -- audiences at different social levels, or in different relationships with the writer, or with different attitudes toward the subject. He might be further asked to characterize briefly the differences in style and tone in the two pieces, and to explain the reasons for the differences.

III. THEME AND STYLE IN LITERATUE (4-5 weeks)

In this section of the course, instructors will assign readings from a collection of poems, stories, essays, etc. that cluster around a central theme. The purpose of this work is not to introduce students to the characteristics of different literary genres and techniques for analyzing each genre, but rather to have students examine varying treatments of a single theme, note different ways of organizing and expressing a comment on that subject, and observe how writer's special ways of handling language affect a reader's response to his work. Students might also be encouraged to recognize that technique of expression is not necessarily separate from what is expressed; how a writer says what he has to say is an important influence on what we understand him to say.

In assignments for this section of the course, instructors should probably encourage analysis that show the connection between theme and technique in all kinds of writing. And they may want to help students learn to discriminate effective from ineffective expression of an idea they may want, that is, to help students learn to evaluate the effectiveness of artistic expression in what they read. Many assignments should bring together two or more for comparison, contrast, and evaluation. But even such assignments need a clear purpose and a well defined audience for the student to address. When writing about literature, as about other subjects, the writer needs to make his reader understand and believe the writer's explanations, interpretations, and judgments.

One reminder may be in order. English 102 is still, fundamentally, a course in writing, not a course in the interpretation of others' writing. Assignments should focus on the process of discovering, selecting, organizing, and expressing judgments about literary works and themes, not on interpretation for its own sake or on the characteristics of different genres as points to be learned for themselves. Comments on students' papers should address the effectiveness with which the students have set forth their ideas, not whether the instructor agrees with the students' ideas. English 102 is not an introduction to literature with writing, it is a course in exposition and argument whose subject matter happens to be literary texts.

Part IV, following, is a discussion by Ian MacMillan of ways in which the teaching of literature might be approached, and of possible writing assignments about literature.

IV. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TREATMENT OF LITERATURE IN ENGLISH 102 (Ian MacMillan)

The following description of a way to approach literature in English 102 sounds as though the study of literature should take up all or most of the four or five weeks set aside for it. Probably a third of the time should be set aside for going over sample reactions to assignments in class, discussing the patterns analytical papers follow and discussing the problems one encounters trying to write about literature. The few textual examples used in the following description are from John Bens' A Search for Awareness.

For the purposes of this course the creative writer is looked at as a man who knows and observes certain things about human life that he feels his readers ought to come into contact with, or experience. Out of what he knows and observes he develops a view of what characterizes life in this century and develops his own definition of the human being, and in some cases constructs a picture of how he thinks life ought to be lived. The short story or poem or play is his way of demonstrating to his readers what he knows and believes. For the purposes of this course the main difference between the creative writer and the theological essayist or critic is that the writer demonstrates or represents ideas through the devices of his craft while the essayists assert straight out what they have to say. In other words, the story or poem or play is the working context of the idea.

Out of this definition of the creative writer we establish the basic form for analysis and discussion and for writing assignments. In order to figure out what a story "means", we try to first suggest the original idea the writer wanted to communicate and then test it by seeing if his use of the "devices" are in fact a demonstration of the idea suggested. In a short story, what he wants us to understand depends on what he has happen to his characters, how he arranges them in a series of incidents, what he has them do to each other. Class discussions would follow a natural pattern based on the idea that in order to recognize why a writer does something, it is best to first have an idea of his probable original intent in writing something, so that his uses of the "devices" will have some suggested justification. In other words, the questions you would pose to a class would line up as follows: 1. What is the story about? What is he trying to show us? 2. What are his principal methods of bringing this idea to us? 3. What are the distinguishing characteristics of his manner of handling the language? The above pattern of discussion is not always going to work, of course, but it good to remember that the biggest things ought to come first. Added to these questions is a discussion concerning the adequacy of the writer's communication--how well does he demonstrate his idea? Does he restrict himself to too small an audience? Considering your own experience, do you believe what he is trying to get across to you? (This part of the discussion should not be used until the student has had some practice in analysis).

Following is an outline of the elements of fiction including the "devices" and some of their definitions simplified:

(This general outline is good for poetry, fiction, and even paintings if your text has any. For poetry, all you do is strike out or make less important all those fictional aspects that are not the major devices of poetry, such as plot.)

I. Conceptual Aspects

  A. Subject---The limitations he sets for the expression of his ideas or observations. Is it a definition of a human tendency, or a picture of man's fate in this century, or a treatment of some political phenomenon?

  B. Theme--- That central idea or moral belief about his subject that he wants to communicate to us. What does he think of our life? Does he have a prescriptive suggestion as to how he thinks we ought to live?

II. Technical Aspects

  A. Plot--- A series of cause and effect incidents making up the chief conventional device, the general demonstration of his idea.

  B. Development and Choice of Characters---The people he picks for the demonstration and the features he imposes on his people so that they will work in the demonstration. In Bens' book, the best example of logical choice of characters is in Jessamyn West's "The Lesson".

C. Structure---Chronological arrangement of incidents, repetition of certain things, etc. The question of structure comes in wherever it seems to bear on theme, as in Murray Heyert's "The New Kid".

D. Representative Objects and Details---Symbols, smaller concrete things placed in stories to help illuminate theme.

III. Smaller Technical Aspects

A Style--- The writer's manner of handling the language in terms of richness, leanness, sentence structure, and how stylistic choices bear on theme.

B. Tone--- The chief theatrical device, the writer's way of manipulating the reader's emotions. This is not a vanish he puts on a story when he has it finished. The writer has an attitude toward his material, and tonal manipulation is his way of communicating that attitude. He wants his readers to feel certain things about his material, and tonal manipulation is his way of directing his reader's emotions. Tone depends on word choice and on subtle manipulations in plot---that is, if he wants us to hate a character, he will have his character think something or do something that doesn't seem to have any other justification than to make us hate him.

C. Point of View---We describe this as the shoulder on which the writer's camera rests, and the mind or minds he allows us to read.

D. Voice--- the presence of the author in relation to his material. In terms of extremes, he can assert his presence and sit with the reader and laugh at his character---'Dear reader, do not grumble at him, because he is incapable of understanding all the ramifications of his plight', or he can be anonymously buried in his character, and all writers occupy positions somewhere between the reader and the character.

The above outline orders things in importance according to the conventional short story. Some stories are written in such a manner as to place certain focuses on things that conventionally are not considered the most important devices; for example, in Dorothy Parker's "The Waltz", style and tone become very important.

It should also be noted here that it is best to treat those fictional devices mentioned in II on as simple a plane as possible and still permit understanding of how they work. Also, treatment of the things mentioned in III should be expanded so that the focus of this section of the course leans in their direction. In each case of class treatment of such things as style, tone and voice, part of the discussion should concern how these elements work in expository prose in comparison to how they operate in fiction. There should be an effort to link this kind of writing to expository writing whenever you get the chance.

Text choice for use in this part of 102 is important, because the material used should consistently surround a central concern. Bens' book is an excellent text for this because all of the material centers around the question of the human being's lot in this century, and around the question of what makes him tick. It attempts to pose a multitude of suggestions toward how we might try to answer the question 'what's it all about?' The book is a sort of dialogue of ideas, and after practicing the recognition of these ideas for a couple of weeks, the student is able to participate in the dialogue himself. Following is an example assignment and one student's reaction to it, which illustrates what I mean by participation in the dialogue.

Write a 500-700 word paper in which you react to the central question in Grisman's "Rockabye Baby", using any of the following five poems (Williams' "The Red Wheelbarrow", MacLeish's "Speech to a Crowd", Robinson's "Cliff Klingenhagen", Dugan's "Morning Song", Frost's "Dust of Snow") which best represent your reaction. The "central question" is the one implied by Bill in his refusal to get out of bed, or implied by dialogue like the following: '"A man has responsibilities," they'd say. "He should earn a good living, get married, raise a family." "Why?" I'd ask them.' The central question is also Grisman's thematic reason for writing the story, that picture of life in this century that he wants to communicate to his readers. His view is in many respects negative, while most of the poets have a positive view which they want to communicate through their poems.

So, using a poem, suggest an answer to Grisman's question. Select the one poem (or two, if you feel that a combination better represents your reaction) which seems to be closest to that reason you might give him for getting out of bed if you had the chance. By reacting to his question in the paper, you will be reacting to all people like Bill---it is important to remember that Bill represents a class of people and it is to them, through him, that you direct your suggestions as to how the question might be answered. Use the peom or poems as an aid in answering the qeustion, that is, explain how the poem might function as an answer. Note that you will have to make a quick thematic examination of whatever poems you choose.

Organize the paper in any way you wish. Much of your grade will depend on how well you can organize and keep control over all the different parts of the paper. Suggestions as to how this might be done will be made in class.

Student Response

Bill, the central character in Grisman's story "Rockabye Baby", is asking a pertinent question of our times. He wants to know what it's all about, why must the individual accede to all the demands of social conformity that plague us today. For some reason that remains unexplained in the context of the story, Bill is suddenly led to question the forces which compel men to accept their mundane routines of daily existence so unquestioningly. That is, Bill wants to know why men must conform to arbitrary standards of social conduct. Moreover, Bill questions life itself. This question takes the form of Bill's refusal to leave his bed. This refusal protests not only man's blind acceptance of the "daily accident", but also, those very elements that cause our lives to be referred to as such. Bill is searching for an answer, and this is significant. Immediately this places him one level higher than the sheep whom he is trying to understand. He doesn't achieve total separation from society, however, because of the manner in which he questions. He is a product of the society, so much so, that he has assumed one of the most characteristic marks of it. He seeks from outside sources the answers of questions that can only be discovered from within. He expects someone to tell him all of life's verities in one simple, digestible sentence.

Archibald MacLeish, in his "Speech to a Crowd", seems to be addressing all of the people like Bill who have achieved the level which allows them to question, yet are seeking the answers from the wrong sources. MacLeish queries:

> Tell me, my patient friends---awaiters of messages---
> From what other shore: from what stranger:
> Whence was the word to come? Who was to lesson you?
>
> Whom are you waiting for? Who do you think will explain?

Shortly after, he answers himself with an impassioned reply:

> Open your eyes! There is only earth and the man.
> There is only you. There is no one else on the telephone.

Bill has become an awaiter of messages. He is different from others only in that he refuses to play the game, to participate in the "daily accident" while he waits. The average questioner is content to be hit over the head with The Truth while involved in the big joke of life, so he plays by house rules: He works steadily, owns a car and a television, goes to church on Sundays and struggles to keep one step beyond the bill collector. Bill, however, doesn't see the point in playing futile games while he awaits the Apocalypse. And he asks the perfect question to his prodders---why? Why should he engage in the futile life struggle?

Perhaps you can see that the essence is not to answer Bill's question, for that, in fact, is one of the very questions that must be answered from within. It is an unfair question because it must be answered in Tautologies. It is a paradox. The essence is to make Bill realize that his answers can only come from within, that he is the only one on the telephone. I would not attempt to motivate Bill to move an inch from his bed, either by force or by sophistry. I would instead say, "Bill, you do your thing. Life is passing you by, not me. I've got life by the tail. I know what it's all about, baby. But I will pull your coat about something, man. You can have it all, too. All you have to do is stop asking me where it's at, and start asking yourself. You'll know."

V. GRADES FOR ENGLISH 102

Final grades for 102 might well be based, as were those in 101, on where the student stands at the end of the course rather than on where he was in the early assignments. Exceptions to this policy are in order in 102, however, where long papers of some significance are assigned in the middle of the term. These may properly be given weight in the final grade even though they come well before the final weeks.

A literal averaging of grades in 102 is probably not the wisest base for a final mark. While the strict average of the important grades is pertinent, staff members should consider how effectively the student can read essays and whether they can write orderly, coherent prose. Students who are deficient in these areas may well receive grades of F, even though a strict average might produce a D or D-. Better to ask students to repeat 102 rather than send them into sophomore literature -- where essays will be assigned and some proficiency in writing is assumed -- without a sure foundation of fundamental skills in self-expression.

All grades should be based on students' accomplishments in reasoning, analysis, and writing, as demonstrated in assigned exercises and themes. Grades should not be based on quizzes or class attendance.

ENGLISH 102, Part B

APPENDIX A

In-Class Theme on Tone

Both of the following passages were written in the nineteenth century. What is the attitude of each author toward the missionaries? How is that attitude revealed?

1. "....Behold the glorious result!--The abominations of Paganism have given way to the pure rites of the Christian worship, the ignorant savage has been supplanted by the refined European! Look at Honolulu, the metropolis of the Sandwich Islands!--A community of disinterested merchants, and devoted self-exiled heralds of the cross, located on the very spot that twenty years ago was defiled by the presence of idolatry. What a subject for an eloquent Bible-meeting orator! Nor has such an opportunity for a display of missionary rhetoric been allowed to pass by unimproved!--But when these philanthropists send us such glowing accounts of one half of their labours, why does their modesty restrain them from publishing the other half of the good they have wrought?--Not until I visited Honolulu was I aware of the fact that the small remnant of the natives had been civilized into draught horses, and evangelized into beasts of burden. But so it is."

2. "As we came in sight we fired a gun, and a good part of Honolulu turned out to welcome the steamer. It was Sunday morning, and about church time, and we steamed through the narrow channel to the music of six different church bells, which sent their mellow tones far and wide, over hills and valleys, which were peopled by naked, savage, thundering barbarians only fifty years ago! Six Christian churches within five miles of the ruins of a Pagan temple, where human sacrifices were daily offered up to hideous idols in the last century! We were within pistol shot of one of a group of islands whose ferocious inhabitants closed in upon the doomed and helpless Captain Cook and murdered him, eighty-seven years ago; and lo! their descendants were at church! Behold what the missionaries have wrought!"

(Dorothy Vella)

INFORMATION ABOUT
FRESHMAN ENGLISH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

OBJECTIVES

English 101-102, a two-semester course in Expository Writing, is taken by all freshmen at the University of Hawaii except those exempted or placed in English 105 (an accelerated course) as a result of their showing on the Anticipatory Examination or the College Board Advanced Placement Examination in English. The purposes of English 101-102 are (a) to help the student to learn to write clear, economical, and coherent short essays; (b) to help him learn to read expository prose with comprehension and discrimination; (c) to help him learn to reason soundly about significant issues, and argue forcibly his position on these issues; (d) to help him develop the power to observe the world around him closely, make sound judgments about what he sees, and formulate useful generalizations about his experiences; (e) to help him develop the power to use language effectively in many different kinds of expository essays. The particular objectives of each semester are listed on pages 3-4 of this memorandum.

STAFF, INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES, AND TEXTS

The staff of freshman English consists almost entirely of full-time instructors. Only a few sections are taught by graduate assistants, all of whom work under close supervision. A few sections are taught by assistant professors.

Instruction is carried on through assigned reading and writing, class meetings (3 one-hour meetings per week), comments on students' essays, and personal interviews between instructor and student. In the first semester students write about ten essays, an average of one every four or five class meetings. Students are required to submit thorough revisions of many of these essays after they have been annotated by instructors. About one-third of the papers is done in class. In the second semester eight to ten essays are required. No word limits are stipulated on most of these essays, and staff members are encouraged not to assign letter grades to individual papers.

In 1967-68, the basic text for English 101 was Van Ghent and Maas, *The Essential Prose*, Alternate Edition. Texts assigned at the option of instructors were Gorrell and Laird, *Modern English Handbook*, and Bilsky, *Patterns of Argument*. The Van Ghent and Maas book will probably be replaced for 1968-69. For English 102, instructors in 1967-68 chose a second collection of essays from those on an approved list, and used a group of literary selections that centered around a single theme (e.g., *A Search for Awareness*, *The Fate of Innocence*, etc.)

THE STUDENT BODY

In 1967-68, about 3,700 freshmen are taking or will take English 101-102. Most of these students come from Hawaii, and most are graduates of the public schools. They compare favorably with students in many state universities, and exhibit weaknesses in grammar and usage similar to those of their contemporaries on the mainland. Most have done relatively little writing and have not learned to read expository prose with care and discrimination. English 101 and 102 may offer such students their first serious study of expository prose. Some students come from homes in which a dialect of English rather than standard English is spoken; in the work of these students one sometimes finds errors and usages that reflect linguistic interference from the dialect used at home. The number of such students, however, is not large.

SYLLABUS AND OTHER GUIDANCE FOR INSTRUCTORS

There is a 50-page syllabus describing the design and emphases in English 101. A much shorter syllabus describes the program in 102. The instructional program is stated in terms of objectives to be sought and types of assignments to be made. Assignments and readings are not prescribed in detail. Considerable opportunity remains for each instructor to develop his own methods for teaching composition. Besides the syllabus, a list of possible readings on composition and rhetoric is given to teach instructor at the start of the fall semester, together with copies of guidelines for making assignments, annotating essays, setting semester grades, and so on.

Before students register in September, there is an orientation period for those new members of the staff who have had little or no experience in teaching freshman composition. Discussions cover the objectives of freshman composition at the University of Hawaii, major concepts in rhetoric, and classroom procedures. Considerable emphasis is placed on techniques for making good theme assignments, annotating and grading themes so that students learn from the comments, and discussing student themes effectively in class. This orientation period continues during the first few weeks of classes. Thereafter, staff meetings are held on an average of twice a month to discuss problems encountered in the teaching of the course and in the evaluation of students' work.

A group of experienced teachers, under the chairmanship of the director of the course, provides guidance for new staff members; these experienced teachers confer with new instructors, discuss assignments, examine graded themes, visit classes, and are regularly available for informal consultation. The experienced teachers prepare reports concerning their work with each new staff member; one copy of the report is given to the staff member, and one to the director of composition. On the assumption that most young teachers will be teaching freshman English during many of their early years in the profession, the experienced faculty member tries to make the teaching of freshman English at the University of Hawaii a valuable part of the professional training of each new member of the staff.

INFORMATION ABOUT FRESHMAN ENGLISH

OBJECTIVES OF FRESHMEN ENGLISH (1967-68)

March, 1968

During both semesters, the student should learn:

to read expository essays with sufficient understanding so that he can summarize them accurately, describe their structure, and evaluate the reasonableness of what they say;

to decide the substance, structure, and style of his essays so that they will all be appropriate to the occasion of writing, the intended audience, and the desired purpose.

In the first semester (English 101), the student should learn:

to explain and interpret, in some detail, statements made in essays read, or in newspapers or magazines;

to make sound evaluations of his experiences and observations;

to evaluate the soundness of his own arguments and those of other writers, by appraising the evidence they use, the premises or assumptions from which they begin, and the steps in their reasoning -- in particular:

(a) to recognize where a writer's reasoning depends on assumptions or unstated premises, to evaluate the reasonableness of these premises, and to determine their importance in the writer's reasoning;

(b) to recognize generalizations and to test the reasonableness of these generalizations;

(c) to recognize the differences between facts, opinions, and statements of preference, and to support and evaluate these statements as appropriate;

(d) to determine the reasonableness of statements that imply casual relationships, or relationships of antecedent and consequent (if...then);

(e) to evaluate prediction statements (statements that say what will happen in future time);

to use, as needed, the various techniques and procedures for defining concrete and abstract words, and to use both kinds of words precisely and discriminatingly in developing his ideas;

to divide a subject into parts so that the subject can be treated in a coherent essay;

to adjust the structure of his sentences to suit the purpose and emphasis in each sentence;

to achieve order in his paragraphs and essays;

to establish and sustain an appropriate "tone of voice" in his own essays, whether those essays are largely descriptive and narrative or expository and interpretive.

The objectives in English 102 can also be given here to show staff members how the year as a whole has been planned.

In the second semester (English 102), the student should learn:

to argue well in favor of an interpretation of present conditions and completed events (these may include works of imaginative literature);

to argue well in support of a proposed course of action (to be taken in future time);

to assemble data and opinions from three or four different sources to assist an inquiry or support a thesis;

to recognize some of the features of language that make up what we call "style," and to vary his style according to the occasion and purpose of writing.